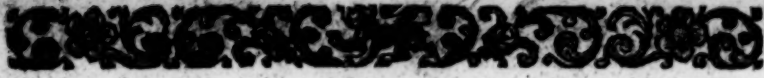


Theology vol 66



1

REMARKS

UPON

Doctor CLARKE's

EXPOSITION

OF THE

CHURCH-CATECHISM.





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L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN CROWNFIELD, at the *Rising-Sun* in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*; and sold by CORNELIUS CROWNFIELD, Printer to the University of Cambridge. M . DCC . LXX .





DOCTOR CLARKE's *Exposition of the Church Catechism* is a Book which will fall into many Hands, both of Clergy and Laity ; and into some, very probably, that will not readily distinguish between the sound and the unsound Parts of it, as it is a Mixture of Both. My Design, therefore, is to point out such Places of it as are most ensnaring, to prevent the Deception of unwary Readers ; that so the useful Parts of it may be rendred more useful, when carefully separated from such as would do harm.

HAD the Author expounded our *Church Catechism*, throughout, according to the known Doctrine and Principles of our Church, and according to the plain and full Meaning of the *Catechism* itself, he might have done good Service to Religion in general, and to our Church in particular : And there could not have been any Thing more seasonable at this Juncture, when our most holy Religion is so boldly insulted by profane Men, and seems to want the friendly Assistance

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of

of every pious and learned Hand. But if this *Exposition*, while it contains many excellent Things, is itself very defective and faulty in others ; and while it aims to support natural Religion and Christian Morality, gives up, or too slightly maintains the most essential Parts of Christian Faith and Worship : If in some of the most fundamental Articles, the Author has either dropp'd the true Sense, or disguised it, or under Colour of expounding, has been confronting and contradicting it ; then it may highly concern every faithful Minister of Christ, to remonstrate against such Artifices, and to caution the less-discerning Readers, that they be not imposed upon by them. I have no Design to detract from the just Reputation of the learned Author in his Grave, nor to undervalue what he has now, or at any Time, well written for the real Service of Religion: But the better he has performed in some Points, the more necessary is it to take notice where he has deserved Censure ; lest Truth and Error, Good and Bad, so mingled, should be imbibed together, and one should serve to recommend and ingratiate the other.

I CONSIDER further, that the very Name of *An Exposition of the Church-Catechism* carries an awful Sound with it, and commands

mands Respect: And when put to a Book, that does not really answer the Title it pretends to, is a dangerous Snare, and may deceive many. We can never be too careful to preserve the Purity, and keep up the Dignity of our Church's Forms, such as our *Articles, Liturgy, Creeds, and Catechism*. Any foul Play here, in wresting the Words, and perverting the Meaning, is corrupting the sincere Milk, and poisoning the Fountains. The *Baptismal* Creed in particular, which is included in the *Catechism*, and is expounded, as to the chief Articles, in the *Catechism* itself, ought to be kept sacred and inviolable against all Attempts, either to disguise the Sense, or to elude the Truths wrapped up in it. If any Persons have new Articles of Faith, or new Catechisms to produce, let them be produced as *new*, and not imposed upon us as Expositions of the *old*. Let the old ones retain their *own* Meaning, and their *full* Meaning, and let the new ones have theirs: And so let Both be tried by the Scripture-Rule, to see whether the new, or old be better. But enough hath been hinted by Way of Preface: I now proceed directly to the Matter in Hand.

I.

I PASS over the first twenty-four Pages of the *Exposition*, which have several good Things in them, and nothing offensive, so far as I have observed. But in Page 25. the Author has an Observation about *Worship*, which must be carefully examin'd. In explaining that Part of the *Catechism*, which concerns the **renouncing the Devil and all his Works**, he enumerates the *Works* of the Devil, emphatically so called, namely, *Lying, Pride, Murder, &c.* and last of all *Idolatry*. Under the Head of *Idolatry* he very justly condemns the *Popish* Practices in worshiping *Images* and *consecrated Elements*, and in *setting up and praying to imaginary Intercessors, Angels and Saints, and the blessed Virgin, instead of praying in the Name of him who is the one Mediator between God and Man, even our Lord Jesus Christ*. He might better have said, *instead of praying to God* : For the Fault of the *Romanists* is not barely their offering up Prayers *in the Name* of those imaginary Intercessors, or their praying to God *through* them, but their praying directly to them, as the Author himself, in the Words but now cited, acknowledges. So that the
latter

latter Part of the Sentence does not well answer to his former, but seems rather to be oddly brought in, only to countenance a favourite groundless Notion of the Author^a, that their Idolatry consists not in setting up *Idol Gods*, (the only true and Scriptural Notion of Idolatry^b) but in setting up *Idol-Mediators*. He goes on: *All which Practices are manifest Idolatry, Worship paid to Idol-Gods, and Idol-Mediators*. He might have spared the latter, because *Idol-Mediator* is a meer Fiction, and the Word has neither Sense, nor Significancy. The Worshipping of any Thing, either as a Medium or otherwise, is making a *God* of it, and the paying any religious Worship to an Idol, is setting up an *Idol-God*. But now comes in the offensive Passage, and for which the Author hitherto had been only paving the Way. *And indeed* (adds he) *every Thing is faulty of this kind, beside the Worship of him alone who created the World by his Power, who redeemed Mankind by his Son, and who sanctifies all good Persons by his holy Spirit*. Is not this as much as saying, that all religious Worship is *faulty*, except the Worship

^a Clarke's Script. Doctrine, p. 344. Edit. 2. with which compare Emlyn of the Worship of Jesus Christ, p. 113.

^b See Waterland's Second Defence, p. 373, 374.

ship of the Father only? And he seems farther to insinuate the Reason why the Father *alone*, in opposition both to the Son and Holy Spirit, is to be worshipp'd : It is because they do not of themselves redeem or sanctify, but the Father does all *by* them, and they are as *Instruments* only, in his Hand: To him therefore, and not to them, is all Glory and Worship to be ascribed. The Thought appears to be much the same with what another Gentleman^a has elsewhere plainly enough express'd, though speaking indeed only of God the Son. *Though the World was created by the Son, yet no Adoration was due to him on that Account, either from Angels or from Men, because it was no Act of Dominion, and he did it merely ministerially ; just as no Adoration is now due from us to Angels for the Benefits they convey to us, because they do it merely instrumentally.* Such, I say, seems to be the Drift and Purport of the Author of the *Exposition*, in the Passage above recited. He appears to have *excluded* the Worship of two of the divine Persons, considering them as *Instruments* only. But because I would be tender of charging any Man with Positions which possibly might not be his, I am content to say, that he has,

^a Collection of Queries, p. 84.

has, at least, *dropp'd* the Worship of two of the divine Persons, has inserted no Provision, or Salvo, so far as appears, which ought to have been done. This Omission of the Author seems not to have been any chance Slip, or occasion'd by any Forgetfulness, but to have been owing rather to Contrivance and Design: For I observe, that he is constant and uniform in the same Neglect, quite through the Book. In Page 230. where he is professedly treating of the Object of Prayer, he expressly confines it to the Person of the Father, taking no notice either of *Son*, or *Holy Ghost*. Again he observes, Page 233. that *the supreme Power, and Perfections of God, are just and unexceptionable Reasons of praying to him*; intimating, as I conceive, that praying to any Persons who are not vested with *supreme Power and Perfections*, is not *unexceptionable*: And it is very well known that he does not ascribe *supreme Power or Perfections* to the Son or *Holy Ghost*. So that here again he seems to have *excluded* them from *Worship*, and has manifestly *dropp'd* their Claim and Title to it. In like manner, Page 293. speaking of the Form of Baptism, he interprets it of dedicating ourselves to the *Service and Worship* of the Father, but to the *Obedience and Imitation* only,

only, of Christ, and to the *Direction* and *Guidance* of the Holy Spirit : So that here, a fourth Time, he has *dropp'd* the Worship of two of the divine Persons, where it ought to have been mention'd. He speaks indeed of worshipping God the Father, *through the one Mediator,*^a and *through the Mediation of Jesus Christ.*^b And he repeats some Texts, such as *Phil. ii. 10, 11.*^c and *Heb. i. 6.*^d which are exprefs for the *Worship* of Christ, according to the common Way of construing them : But he barely repeats them, not telling us whether he understands them of proper *Worship*, or otherwise. This so remarkable Reservedness and Shyness of the Author in so important an Article, looks, at least, as if the Intent were to throw off the Worship, both of the *Son* and *Holy-Ghost*. But perhaps we may be able to judge more certainly of his Sentiments from his other Writings. In *Scripture Doctrine*, published 1712. he observed,^e as from Bp. *Wake*,^f that *we should pray to God only, and to him as our Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord*. But then he subjoin'd a provisory Salvo for the
Worship

^a Page 153. ^b Page 152. ^c Page 57. ^d Page 59.

^e *Clark's Script. Doctr.* p. 362. Edit. 1.

^f Abp. *Wake's* Words are, *through Faith in Christ Jesus*; referring to *Gal. iii. 26.* which shews that he is there speaking of a different Matter, and not determining the Object of Prayer to the Father only. *Comm. on the Catech.* p. 130. Edit. 3.

Worship of God the Son, in these Words :
The Meaning is not, that Prayers may not at all be offered to the Son, but that they must always ultimately be directed to God only, as our Father, through Christ. This *Salvo*, however, was dropp'd in the next Edition of *Scripture-Doctrine*,^a in 1719. By which it may seem that the Author had then changed his Mind, as to the Article of *Worship*. And indeed in *Modest Plea*, published that same Year, he contends^b for the Manner of worshipping the Father *through* Christ, in opposition to every other Mode or Form of Worship, or in opposition to the direct Worship of any Person beside the Father only. The Reader, I hope, will not think it a Digression from my Purpose, if I here examine all that has been urged upon that Head in *Modest Plea*, since it may reasonably be presumed, that the *Exposition*, made by the same Author, had the same Views, and was drawn up according to much the same Principles.

I. HE pleads, that our Saviour's Direction to his Disciples was, *When ye pray, say, Our Father.* Which if he understands with utmost Strictness, laying an Em-
 C phasis

^a See Clarke's *Scripture-Doctrine*, p. 297. Edit. 2.

^b Clarke's *Modest Plea*, p. 177.

phasis upon *when*, as if we were never to pray otherwise, he will thereby exclude the Use of all Prayers but the *Lord's Prayer*. For undoubtedly, *when ye pray, say*, belongs as much to the whole Prayer as to the two first Words, and leaves as much Room for a different Direction (if otherwise proper) as for different Prayers. But I humbly conceive, that our Lord's Command about Praying (*when ye pray, say*) will be abundantly answered, if the Lord's Prayer be but constantly joined with our other Prayers, and never omitted in our solemn Devotions.

2. HE further pleads, that *the Practice of the primitive Church, in the three first Centuries, (as appears by the Passages cited in Dr. Clarke's Scripture-Doctrine, * to which may be added that of Irenæus,†) was to direct their Prayers uniformly to God the Father, through his Son Jesus Christ.* To which I answer,

IF he means by *uniformly*, constantly and invariably, so as to exclude every other Kind or Form of Worship, or Prayer, the Report is not true, but notoriously false. St. *Thomas* address'd himself directly to our Saviour, in a high Rapture of Devotion, calling out to him, *my Lord and my*

* Part ii. Sect. 44.

† Lib. iv. c. 33.

my God.^a The Disciples all worshipp'd Christ directly as he went up into Heaven.^b St. *Stephen*, full of the Holy Ghost, pray'd to Christ with his dying Breath, and in as solemn a Prayer as our Lord's upon the Cross.^c St. *Paul* frequently wish'd and pray'd for Grace, Peace, Mercy, Direction, and Comfort; not from the Father *by* or *through* Christ, but from Both jointly; from God the Father *and* the Lord Jesus Christ, or from Christ singly.^d Thrice he pray'd solemnly to Christ, that he might be deliver'd from the *Thorn in the Flesh*:^e Once he devoutly address'd himself to all the three Persons jointly:^f Some devotional Acts he perform'd towards the *Holy Ghost* singly;^g and a noted Doxology to *Christ*, as *over all God blessed for ever*.^h St. *Peter* also put up his Doxologies to Christ.ⁱ St. *John* also pray'd for Grace, Mercy, and Peace,

C 2

from

^a John xx. 28.^b Luke xxiv. 51, 52.^c Acts vii. 59, 60. *Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit. Lord, lay not this Sin to their Charge.* Compare Luke xxiii. 46. *Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit.* Luke xxiii. 34. *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*^d 1 Thess. i. 1. iii. 11. v. 28. — 2 Thess. i. 2. ii. 16, 17. iii. 16, 18. 1 Cor. i. 3. xvi. 23. 2 Cor. i. 2. Gal. i. 3. vi. 18. Rom i. 7. xvi. 20, 24. Ephes. i. 2. vi. 23. Philipp. i. 2. ii. 19. 24. iv. 23. Coloss. i. 2. Philem. 3. 25. 1 Tim. i. 2, 12. Tit. i. 4. 2 Tim. i. 2. iv. 17, 18, 22.^e 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8, 9.^f 2 Cor. xiii. 14.^g Rom. ix. 1. xv. 30.^h Rom. ix. 5.ⁱ 1 Pet. ii. 3, 4. iv. 11. 2 Pet. iii. 18.

from God the Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ,^a not merely *through* Christ. And he begg'd the like from all the three Persons jointly.^b The *Psalmist*, of old Time, worshipp'd Christ as *God*, and as the *Lord that laid the Foundation of the Earth*, the *Jehovah*.^c The holy Angels of God worship him.^d The whole Creation join in the same common Doxology to the Father and the Son;^e not to the Father *through* the Son. So stood the Practice according to Scripture Accounts. As to primitive Practice, in the Ages next succeeding the Apostles, there are many Instances of the Martyrs and others praying directly to Christ, and abundant Proofs of the Worship of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Testimonies have been collected by several Hands, and may be seen in *English*, with proper Remarks upon them.^f To which may be added, one general Argument from what pass'd in the *Praxean*, *Noetian*, and *Sabellian* Controversies; in which the Catholicks were charged with *worshipping three Gods*, and never

^a 2 John iii.^b Rev. i. 4, 5.^c Heb. i. 8, 10, 11, 12. ^d Heb. i. 6.^e Revel. v. 11, 12, 13.^f *Bingham's Antiquities*, B. xiii. c. 2, 3. *Berriman's Review*, and *Second Review*. — *Sermons*, p. 155, &c. *Mangey's Defence of Doxologies*. *Abrah. Taylor's True Scripture Doctrine*, p. 79, &c. 374, &c.

never denied the Fact, as to their worshipping Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, but disowned the Charge of worshipping *three Gods*, asserting the Unity of the Godhead in three Persons.

Now as to what the *Modest Plea* pretends from *Justin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, and *Origen*, it is indeed plain enough, and no one denies, that the primitive Christians often, or generally, offered up Prayers to the Father *through* Christ, (and *through* the *Holy Ghost* too) but it does not appear that they were *uniform* in the Practice, or that *all* Prayers ran in that Form: The contrary is evident. If any Thing can be justly pleaded as to *Origen's* Opinion, from one Book *supposed* to be his, about *Prayer*, it was his *Opinion* only, and not his *constant* Opinion, against the Judgment and Practice of the whole Church, and corrected afterwards by his own better Thoughts in his Books against *Celsus*, as has been often proved. ^a

3. MODEST PLEA goes on: *Even in the former Part of the fourth Century, it does not appear (notwithstanding the growing Disputes about speculative Matters,) that*

^a See Bingham's Antiq. B.xiii. c.2. Waterland's second Defence, p.69, 109, 397, &c. See also the late learned Editor of *Origen*, πρὸς ἐβζ, p.78, 81, 82.

that there was yet any thing more put into their publick Liturgies than the general Doctrines of Christianity, in which all agreed. To which it is sufficient to answer, that it does not appear that there ever was any publick Liturgy of the Christian Church that directed all Prayers to the Father only, or that did not offer up Worship to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: So that if nothing was inserted more than the general Doctrines of Christianity, we shall then have a fair and good Proof from the early Liturgies, so far as we have any Accounts of them, that the Faith in, and the Worship of three divine Persons were the general Doctrines of Christianity in the purest and best Ages.

4. MODEST PLEA farther urges, that *in the third Council of Carthage, to prevent Innovations then arising, it was decreed, that when the Priest stands at the Altar, he should direct his Prayer always to the Father.*

YES, *when the Priest stands at the Altar*; and there were particular Reasons for it.^a But that very Restriction shews, that in other Parts of their Service they were not confined to any such Rule: Besides, that

^a See Petavius de Trin. l. 3. c. 7. sect. 15. Bingham Antiq. B. xiii. c. 2.

that even there, the Glorification in the Cloſe was in common to Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt. That Council was held under *Aurelius*, Biſhop of *Carthage*, in the Year 397. and *St. Auſtin*, Biſhop of *Hippo*, was aſſiſting at it. It is not very likely that ſuch Men as they ſhould have any Deſign to throw off the Worſhip of the Son or Holy Ghoſt. *St. Auſtin* well underſtood the Manner of praying *through* Chriſt, but never thought it any Objection againſt praying alſo directly *to* Chriſt: *O-ramus ad illum, per illum, in illo.** *We pray*, ſays he, *to him, through him, in him.*

5. MODEST PLEA ſays farther; *At this Day the Church, in her ſolemn Exhortation to Priests at their Ordination, directs them to pray continually to God the Father, by the Mediation of our only Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, for the heavenly Aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt.* Very right: It is the ordinary Rule and Method of Praying; but neither our Church, nor any Church, ever intended to omit or ſet aſide direct Prayer to the other two Perſons.

6. THE ſame Direction is actually obſerved in much the greater Part of the whole Liturgy, that is, in every Part
where

* *St. Auſtin* in *Pſal. lxxxv.* Tom. iv. p. 901. Ed. *Bened.*

where either the Composition or Expressions are ancient. But upon due Inquiry, it will be found, that the *ancient* Way was, to take just such a Method as our Church has taken, namely, to contrive that the Prayers, for the most Part only, shall be directed to the Father, and not the whole Liturgy.

7. BISHOP BULL ^a takes notice, with great Approbation, that in all the Liturgies of the Catholick Church, most of the Prayers are directed to God the Father. Right again; *most* of the Prayers, not *all* the Prayers. So it is in Scripture, so in the primitive Liturgies, and so in all Christian Liturgies. Generally the Prayers so run, but not *uniformly*.

8. THE Modest Pleader adds; *It is to be observed, says Bishop Bull, that in the Clementine Liturgy, so called, which is by the Learned on all Hands confessed to be very ancient, and to contain the Order of Worship observed in the Churches before the Time of Constantine, — all the Prayers are directed to God, in the Name of his Son Jesus Christ, as they are, says he, God be praised, in our Liturgy.* The last Words shew, that Bishop Bull did not mean it of *all* the Prayers, but of the *most* only,

^a Bull D. F. Sect. 2. c. 9. f. 15.

only, as is the Case in our Liturgy, which he mentions as parallel. Indeed, Bishop *Bull's* Thoughts were intent upon quite another Matter than what he is here cited for; designing only to say, that *no* Prayers were anciently offered up to *Angels*; which made him say *all*, in opposition to that only. His Words are these:

“ IN the *Clementine* Liturgy, so called,
 “ which is, &c. ---- there is not one
 “ Prayer to be found, from the Beginning
 “ to the End of it, made either to An-
 “ gel or Saint (no, not so much as any
 “ such Prayer as this; *O Michael, O*
 “ *Gabriel, O Peter, O Paul*, pray for
 “ us) but *all* the Prayers are directed to
 “ God, in the Name of his Son Jesus
 “ Christ, as they are (God be praised) in
 “ our Liturgy.” However, if the *Mo-*
dest Pleader had not been too much in
 haste, he might himself have look'd into
 the *Clementine* Liturgy, and there have
 seen, with his own Eyes, one very solemn
 and pompous Prayer,^a directed intirely to
 God the Son, and *Part* ^c of another, be-
 sides many Doxologies directed *to* God the
 Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,^d not to the

D first

^a *Bull's* Posthumous Works, Vol. 2. 476.

^b Constitut. Apostol. L. viii. c. 7.

^c Ibid. L. vii. c. 43.

^d Ibid. L. viii. c. 12, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, 29, 38, 39, 41.

first Person only *through* the other. And now, if all this may be met with in that very Liturgy, tho' it is generally supposed to have gone through *Arian* Hands, and to have suffer'd Corruption by them, what might we not have expected more to our Purpose in the same Liturgy, had it come down to us intire, as at first drawn up by the Orthodox Compilers.

9. THERE is one Plea more which is much insisted upon through several Pages,* to this Effect; *Whether the Son and Holy Ghost be equal or not equal to the Father; -- Whether consubstantial or not consubstantial, yet to worship uniformly the one God the Father through Christ, --- to direct all our Praises, Prayers, and Petitions, primarily to the Father, through the Merits and Mediation of the Son, is undoubtedly, upon all Hypotheses, right and sufficient in Practice, without any Danger of Error or Mistake; being what all sincere Christians might easily and most safely agree in, and indeed, all that they promise at their Baptism.* This Reasoning is fallacious, and goes upon several weak and false Suggestions. How can the throwing out the Son and Holy Ghost from direct Worship be *right and sufficient* upon all *Hypotheses*, when

* *Modest Plea*, p. 178, 179, 180, 181, 182.

when upon the Hypothesis that the three Persons are *equal*, and are all together the *one God*, (which is something more than an *Hypothesis*,) they have all an equal Claim to divine Worship, and ought to be honour'd accordingly? But Christians may safely join in Prayers made to the Father only! Very true, and they may safely join also in some Prayers, particularly in the *Lord's Prayer*, where no Mention at all is made of *Jesus Christ*. And might not a *Deist* argue, from Parity of Reason, for the throwing out Christ *Jesus*, that so both Christians and Deists may agree in one Liturgy, directing all Prayers to the one eternal God? If it be said that neither the Precepts nor Examples found in Scripture will permit Christians thus to curtail their Prayers to oblige the *Deists*, the same I say as to Orthodox Christians, that neither will the Scripture Rule, or Apostolical Practice, or the very Reason of the Thing permit, that they should totally lay aside the direct Worship of God the Son, or God the Holy Ghost. It is in vain to cast about for any far-fetch'd reasons, colours, or pretences in a plain Case. Supposing it not necessary that all Doctrines, even tho' very important, should be express'd in a publick Liturgy, (though if they were, I should not think it at all improper

per or amiss;) yet certainly the Liturgy should be so contrived, as effectually to point out the *Object* of *Worship*. If the Supplicants cannot agree about the very Object of Worship, I do not see how they can at all unite in one common Liturgy, or so much as hold Communion with each other. Indeed, all should agree to take Scripture for their *Rule*, and the Practice of the three first Centuries for the *Model* of their Worship. This is the shortest and best Way of composing all Differences: They that refuse it are justly blameable, and are the Dividers of the Christian Church; and be it at their Peril who do so, as they will answer it at the great Day of Accounts.

I have now run through every Thing that carried any Face of Argument in *Modest Plea*, for worshipping *uniformly*, as he calls it, God the Father through Christ. Upon the whole, it may appear, that there is no such *uniform* method prescribed by Scripture, or Apostolical Practice, or the Custom of the Church of Christ in the first and purest Ages. If our paying Worship *to*, as well as *through* the Son or holy Spirit, be what the Author of the *Exposition* condemns as *faulty*, then say I, *faulty* were all or most of the primitive Martyrs in their dying Breath; *faulty*
all

all the ancient Churches of Christ; *faulty* St. *Stephen*, St. *Paul*, and St. *John*; *faulty* our blessed Lord himself (with Reverence be it spoken) who has commanded us not barely to worship the Father *through* the Son, but to *honour the Son even as we honour the Father*; ^a and has also instituted the Form of Baptism in the Name of *the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*: Not in the Name of the Father *only, through* the Son, and *in* the Holy Ghost, as some of the antient *Arians* would gladly have turn'd it.* I hope the Reader will pardon me for dwelling so long upon this high Article: It is no *speculative* Matter, but strictly *practical*, and of the greatest Concernment: To rob our blessed Lord and the blessed Spirit of all religious Worship, is Blasphemy and Sacrilege. It is what the ancient *Arians* durst never venture upon; so strong was the Force of Scripture and universal Practice, as to make them act even against Principle. The *Sorinians* themselves, most of them, driven to it by plain Dint of Scripture, plead warmly for the divine Worship of Christ, and give no Quarter to them that disown it.

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^a John v. 23. See *Waterland's* first and second Defence,
Q. xix.

^b Vid. *Theodor. Lect. Eccl. H.* p. 576. Edit. *Cant.*

The *Racovian* Catechism itself is express both for *Adoration* and *Invocation* of Christ, and does not allow them to be *Christians* that reject it.* So essential to Christianity is the Worship of Christ, in the Judgment even of Adversaries, who if they are therein less consistent than others, yet appear more pious, and have a greater Reverence for *Scripture*. However, all that I positively charge the *Exposition* with, is, *dropping* the Worship of two of the divine Persons, and taking no Care (where it ought to have been taken) to inforce and secure it, or so much as to make mention of it. Having done with this important Article, I shall be shorter upon the rest.

II.

I HAVE nothing further to observe of the *Exposition*, till we come to Page 40. where the Reader will find these Words of the Catechism :

Q.

* *Quid vero sentis de iis hominibus qui Christum nec invocandum, nec adorandum censent ?*

Quandoquidem illi demum Christiani sunt qui Jesum agnoscunt esse Christum, seu coelestem illum populi divini Regem, ac porro eum divina ratione colunt, ejusque nomen invocare non aubitant ; qua de causa supra vidimus Christianos ita describi, quod nomen Domini Jesu Christi invocent, facile intelligitur, eos qui id facere nolunt, Christianos hactenus non esse, quamvis alioqui Christi nomen profiteantur & doctrina illius se adherere dicant. Cateches. Eccles. Polon. p. 172. 173.

Q. What dost thou chiefly learn in these Articles of thy Belief?

A. First, I learn to believe in God the Father, who hath made me and all the World.

Secondly, In God the Son, who hath redeemed me and all Mankind.

Thirdly, In God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me and all the elect People of God.

I take the more Notice of this Part of the *Catechism*, because the Author has neglected it. He has transcrib'd it, as he found it, placing it at the End of the Creed, but we see no more of it. He goes on afterwards to expound the Creed in his Way, but says nothing of *God* the Son, or *God* the Holy Ghost; that is, you hear no more of their *Godhead*. He never asserts the Divinity of either, never so much as gives them the Title of *God*. What the Compilers recommended *chiefly* to our Faith, he silently passes over; and instead of recommending the same Doctrine, seems to throw it quite out. This is not doing Justice to our *Church-Catechism*, nor answering the Title of the Book: Expounding is
one

one Thing, expunging is another. Since this was the Design, the fairer Way would have been, to have said, *The Church-Catechism explain'd, and corrected*, rather than to have given the Title of an *Exposition* to the *Whole*, which belongs only to a *Part*. I thought it not improper to take Notice of this, though it may appear slight, because it is really of Weight: For great Impositions often arise only from Words and Names. But I pass on.

FROM Page 42. to Page 49. the Author has some previous Observations, to prepare his Way for what he intended upon the *Apostles Creed*. The Sum is, that he is to interpret the Creed by *Scripture*, that is, by his *own* Sense of Scripture; not considering that he had undertaken to expound the *Catechism*, which had interpreted the Creed to quite another Sense, and thereby precluded all further tampering with it; unless an Expositor's Business be to set one Part of the Catechism against the other, and to contrive that the Whole may hang loosely together. It is impossible to reconcile the Principles laid down in the *Exposition*, with what the *Catechism* plainly means by *God the Son*, and *God the Holy Ghost*, as taught in the Creed. The Church Forms ought most certainly to

to be interpreted according to the Mind of the Church that made them : And if so interpreted, they appear not to agree with Scripture, they are to be rejected as *false*, and not strain'd to a Sense not their own, in order to make them *true*. The Scriptures in this Case are indeed the *Rule of Truth*, but not the *Rule of Interpretation*. They are the Rule for *receiving* any Forms, but not the Rule for *understanding* them. Their *Meaning* is first to be judged of, from the natural Force of the Words, the Intent of the Compiler, and the Laws of true Criticism : And then indeed after that, their *Truth* is to be judged of by their Conformity to Scripture.* But to proceed.

PAGE 45. the *Exposition* says, *In Things fundamental, in Things required as of Necessity to eternal Salvation, 'tis evident this Rule (of Scripture) ought to be so plain, that no honest careful Mind, even of mean Capacity, to whom the Sermons of Christ and his Apostles have been distinctly rehearsed, can be in any Danger of mistaking.* This is plausible Talk, and it is obvious enough to perceive for what Purpose it is brought. I shall examine further into it presently : But in the mean while, let me

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observe

* See *Waterland's Case of Arian Subscription*, p. 19, 20.

observe what will follow on Supposition that this Principle is true and just. First, it will follow, that it is not necessary to Salvation to believe that the Father *alone* is necessarily existing, since innumerable very *honest* and *careful* Minds, and of no mean Capacities, ever since the Days of the Apostles, have been in such Danger of mistaking here (if it be a Mistake) that they have lived and died in a Disbelief of it. Secondly, It will further follow, that it is not necessary to Salvation to believe that the Father *alone*, or absolutely speaking, is the God of the Universe, exclusive of the Son and Holy-Spirit: For this also is a Doctrine, which the Christian World in a Manner, of very *honest* and *careful* Minds, never could be convinc'd of. Thirdly, it will farther follow, that none of the Propositions in *Scripture Doctrine*, so far as they are contrary to our Church's Doctrine, are of Necessity to Salvation, for the Reasons before assign'd. Fourthly, It will likewise follow, that it is by no means necessary to Salvation to believe that all religious Worship, or all Prayers are to be directed to the Father: For innumerable good Christians, Martyrs on Earth, and now Saints in Heaven, were of a very contrary Perswasion. Fifthly, It will

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follow, that the Belief of the *Apostles Creed*, as interpreted in the *Exposition* (and of which we shall treat in its Place) is not necessary to Salvation, because it was never before so interpreted, or so understood by the Generality of Christians, antient or modern, of the most *honest* and *careful* Minds. These several Corollaries seem naturally to follow from the Principle laid down in the *Exposition*; and they appear to be full of Comfort and Consolation to as many as reject the new Schemes. Nevertheless, I must own, that I have not Confidence enough to trust in the Principle itself; nor do I take it to be either a *safe* or a *true* Principle. It is a wrong Way of judging of *fundamental* Doctrines, and will not help us at all in it. 1st, Because there is no Truth whatever so *plain* and evident, but it may be obscur'd and darkened to such a Degree, that common Christians may be puzzled and confounded, and no longer think it *plain*. I except not the Doctrine of the Existence of a God, the plainest of any, provided common Christians be but admitted to Atheistical Disputations, or to the reading of Pamphlets written by profane Men. 2dly, I dislike the Principle the more, because any *Few* or *Deist* may proceed upon it, and say, that

the Proofs upon which Revelation rests (*Miracles* and *Prophecies*) ought to be so plain, that no honest and careful Mind, though of mean Capacity, can be in Danger of mistaking; and may farther urge, that *Deists*, *Jews*, *Pagans*, and *Mahometans* (some of them sure of honest and careful Minds) have attended to and considered those supposed Proofs, and yet have rejected them. 3dly, If Christianity were thus thrown off, and every other Religion but *natural Religion*, I know not how much even of that might go off next, upon the same Principle, and by the same Rule, as soon as artful Disputers have contriv'd to puzzle and perplex whatever they dislike, that it shall be no longer *plain* to common Capacities, though of honest and careful Minds. Suppose, for Instance, *Freedom of Will*, and the *Immortality of the Soul*, and a *future Account* to be Fundamentals all in natural Religion; yet let but an artful Disputant once take those Subjects in hand, and do what in him lies to darken and perplex them, and I do not say that many an honest Country-Man, but many a Half-Scholar too may not know what to think of those supposed *plain Things*, but may be quite confounded. 4thly, In the last Place, I dislike the Rule, because, I think, it will leave every Man
just

just where he was before, and not at all the wiser as to pitching upon fundamental Doctrines. For every one will chuse according to his own Taste, and will be sure to leave out whatever he takes to be obscure. The Author of the *Exposition*, no doubt, intended to leave out the real *Divinity* of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, because not *plain* to him: And it is for that very Purpose his Rule seems to have been calculated. A *Sabellian* would strike out their *Personality*, because not *plain* to him; and so others, other Articles, for the like Reason. One is not clear about the Doctrine of *Works*, inclining rather to the *Solifidian* or *Antinomian* Principles; another is not satisfied about the Possibility of a *Resurrection*; a third is doubtful about *Hell Torments*, and so on. Was there ever any Man of any Perswasion that would allow the contrary Perswasion to be *plain* to honest and careful Minds? A Plea which will equally serve in all Cases, will serve in none; nor will it be of any Use to shorten or decide Disputes. Upon the whole, I should think it much better to say, that whatever can be proved to be taught in Scripture, and in the first and purest Ages, as of Necessity to Salvation, is now also necessary to all Christians, but in such a Degree, as they are capable of

of knowing, or doing it. Allowances must be always made for Want of Capacity, or Opportunity, and for insuperable Prejudices; as to the Strength of which, and how far they are pleadable at the Bar of Judgment, before a merciful Judge, we are not commission'd, nor qualified to determine, but must leave to an all-knowing God. As to marking out any particular Catalogue of Fundamentals, or prescribing such a certain Quantity of Faith, * as sufficient for Salvation, it would be an idle Attempt, and very solemn Trifling: For the same Fundamentals would no more suit every Man, where Capacities and Circumstances are so different, than the same Quantity of Food every Stomach or Constitution: But there are some Truths, both in natural and reveal'd Religion, of greater Importance than others, and more obvious also to be known; and these we are more especially bound to believe and maintain, not rejecting or despising the other, but paying them the Respect due to their Weight and Worth, be it less or more. And when I say *we* are bound, I would be understood to mean it, in different Proportion and Degree, according to the almost infinite Variety of Men's Capa-

* See *Waterland's History of the Athanasian Creed*, first Edit. p. 158. second edit. p. 285.

Capacities, Opportunities, or outward Circumstances. And as to the *Importance* of any Article, that may be judg'd of according as it more or less affects the whole System of the Christian Religion (as there is a Difference between the main *Beams* and the *Rafters* in a Building) or as it is more or less connected with the two great Commandments, the *Love of God*, and the *Love of our Neighbour*. I had almost forgot to take notice of the Author's Saying, *To whom the Sermons of Christ and his Apostles* have been rehears'd, instead of saying, to whom *the Scriptures of the New Testament* have been made known. I hope, he was not in the Sentiments of those who are for fixing the *Fundamentals* from the *Gospels* and *Acts* only, setting aside the *Epistles* as of no Weight in the Case, because *occasionally* written, after every Thing material had been settled and establish'd. I see no Sense or Truth in that Principle, nor why we are to make a Distinction where God has made none. Every Part of the New Testament is equally *inspir'd*, and the whole taken together, is our Rule of Faith and Practice. I know not why Men should single out a Part only, preferring it to the rest, except it be that they care not how little Religion they embrace

embrace, and are afraid of being overburthen'd with Revelations from God. I do not charge the Author of the *Exposition* with making any such Distinction; only as his Manner of expressing himself seems to give too much Countenance to it, it could not be improper to enter a Remark upon it.

IN Page 48, 49. the Author has a Fling upon Creeds, which deserves some Notice. He says, *Into the Form* (Office he means) *of Baptism, and into the Catechism, and into the Order for the Visitation of the Sick, the Apostles Creed only has very wisely been put, as being easy, and clear, and intelligible to all, and not mix'd with any Matters of doubtful Disputation.* It is a narrow and a partial Way of thinking, to judge of the *Wisdom* of every Thing, or any Thing, only by its falling in with one's particular Taste, or favourite Opinion. No doubt, but his Compliment upon what has been so *wisely* done, means no more than this, that it was *wise* to chuse a Creed which is shortest and least explicate on the Doctrine of the *Trinity*. Happy for us that we live in the *West*, and were once in Communion with the Church of *Rome*, to which we are oblig'd for this Creed. Had we happen'd to be of the *Greek Church*,
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we might have had the *Jerusalem Creed*, or *Nicene*, in those Offices, Both older than the *Roman*, (as it now stands,) and Both more explicite upon the Doctrine of the *Trinity*. The Creed called the *Apostles*, or *Apostolical*, has had a particular Respect paid to it, because, by a *vulgar Error*, deriv'd from the fifth Century, it had been conceiv'd to have owed its Birth to the *Apostles* themselves; though it is really nothing else but the Creed of the *Roman Church*, and called *Apostolical*, because the *Roman See* has had the Name of *Apostolical*.^{*} Our Reformers, who compiled our Offices, were scarce yet free from the Prejudices of the vulgar Error that had long obtain'd, though *Valla* and *Erasmus* had before smelt it out. Later Criticks, as *Gerard Vossius*, and many more, have demonstrated the Fabulousness of that antient Tradition. Had our Reformers been *wise* enough at that Time to see it, it may be doubted whether they would have paid so much Respect to this Creed: so that it is wrong to commend their *Wisdom* in it, when it might be more owing to their *Simplicity*, and to the then infant State of *Criticism*. However, in the *Communion Office*, which

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^{*} See *Wall's History of Infant Baptism*, Part 2. c. 9. p. 507. *Waterland's Sermons*, p. 326.

is as sacred and solemn an Office as any, the *Nicene* (*Cpolitan*) *Creed* has been *wisely* inserted, after the Example of the *Spanish, Gallican, German, and lastly Roman* Offices: And the *Athanasian* also has been as *wisely* honoured with a Place in our Liturgy, after the like Precedents. I must observe further, that as Creeds were at first chiefly contriv'd to be as *Tests* against Heresies, and to guard the Essentials of Faith, it is no Commendation of a Creed that it runs in *Generals* only, if there was any Occasion or Necessity for being more *particular*; for then the Creed would not answer its principal Aim and End. The *Roman* Church having been less disturbed with Heresies than the Eastern Churches, was content with a shorter Creed: Had Circumstances been different, we should have found their Creed more *explicite*, like the Eastern. It would not be a wise Thing in any Church to chuse the shorter and more general Creeds, when the ancient Faith is endanger'd by Heresies, and wants more *explicite* Professions to secure it. Novelists, without Question, will commend the *shorter* Creeds, as standing least in their Way; but they that value the *ancient Faith*, must for that very Reason prefer the *larger*. What one thinks *wisely* done, as
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most suiting his Purpose, if he judges right, does as good as tell the opposite Side, that it was *not wisely* done for them, and may be a Hint sufficient to awaken their Caution. As to the Pretence about a shorter Creed being more *easy, clear, and intelligible* to all, 'tis Colour and Appearance only. The shorter generally a Creed is, the more *obscure* and *ambiguous*, and the harder to fix the Sense, or to know precisely what the Words mean. To determine, for Instance, what the Words *only Son*, or *Lord*, means in the *Roman* Creed, is not so easy or obvious, as in the Eastern Creeds, which are larger and more explicite. But it is indeed easier to *pervert* the Sense of a short Creed, and to wrest it to a foreign Meaning, or to what the Interpreter pleases to call *easy, clear, and intelligible*; that is, to his own favourite Hypothesis, *clear* to be sure, and *easy* to himself; for who ever suspects his own Judgment, or does not think his own Notions clear and intelligible? However, I must observe farther, that what we are chiefly to consider in such Cases, is not so much what lies level to the Imagination, or is easy to conceive, as what may be *clearly* prov'd to be *true*. There may be *mysterious* Truths, which are not therefore to be rejected because *mysterious*,

unless we reject *Eternity, Immensity, Self-Existence, Omniscience*, and the like; because not so easy to conceive as a definite Time, or a limited Presence, or a Being that had a Beginning, or finite Knowledge. Every wise Man would chuse a Doctrine the rather for being *clear* and every Way intelligible, other Circumstances being equal; but still the first and best Recommendation of it must be its *Truth*. But to return to the *Apostolical* Creed, so called; what I affirm of it, and shall shew presently, is, that it contains the same Truths briefly wrapp'd up, which the larger Creeds express in more direct Terms. It is not at all clearer, or less mysterious as to the *Things* themselves; and as to the *Words* of it, it is, because short, more ambiguous and obscure, not so easily seen into at first View: so that, after all, its boasted Clearness amounts only to this, (as before hinted) that its real Sense is not so fully and plainly express'd, but is the most liable of any to be misconstrued, and misunderstood.

III.

IN Page 49 the Author enters upon his Exposition of the Creed. He tells us,
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Page 52. that the *Reason why* God, in the first Article, is stiled the Father, is to denote that he is the original Author or Giver of Life to all the intelligent Beings in the Universe. And he adds, Page 53. This is the Sense first and principally intended in this first Article of the Creed. But this, with Submission, is a very great Mistake, and is setting out with an Error: For *Father*, in the first Article, principally means Father of his *only Son*, and has Reference to it. I am unwilling to suspect that the Author here had any Covert Design to *exclude* the Son and Holy Ghost from being, with the Father, *Author* or *Giver of Life* to all intelligent Creatures, or to *include* them among the other *Beings* of the *Universe*, to whom the Father is *Giver of Life*. However that be, his Construction of *Father* in this Place is wide and foreign. *Cyril* and *Ruffinus*, the oldest Expositors we have extant, understood better. *When you hear the (Name of) Father*, says *Ruffin*, *understand Father of a Son, which Son is the Image of the Substance aforesaid.** *Bishop Pearson*, speaking

* *Patrem cum audis, Filii intellige Patrem, qui Filius supra-dicta sit imago substantia.* *Ruffin* in *Symb.* p. 18. Edit. Ox.
 *Ου γὰρ δεῖ μόνον εἰς ἓνα Θεὸν πιστεύειν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ πατέρα, τῆτον εἶναι μονογενῆς, κ.τ.λ. *Cyrill.* *Catech.* vii. c. 1. p. 113. Edit. *Bened.*

ing of such Paternity as the *Exposition* mentions, says, " It is not the principal or
 " most proper Explication of God's Paternity; for as we find one Person in a
 " more peculiar Manner the Son of God,
 " so we must look upon God as in a more
 " peculiar Manner the Father of that
 " Son. - - - Indeed I conceive this, as the
 " most eminent Notion of God's Paternity,
 " so the original and proper Explication of
 " this Article of the Creed.* " His Reasons are, 1. Because the ancient Fathers deliver no other Exposition of it. 2. Because the first Occasion, Rise, and Original of the Creed itself requireth this, as the proper Interpretation. He refers to the Form of Baptism, *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, where Father and Son are plainly Correlates. 3. I shall only add, what is hinted by that most learned and judicious Expositor, that God was undoubtedly Father of his Son before he was Father of the Universe, and therefore that Paternity, as the first and highest, must be principally, if not solely, here intended: No one that had not an Hypothesis to serve, could possibly mistake in so plain a Case.

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* *Pearson* on the Creed, Article 1. p. 30, 31.

HE proceeds Page 53. to explain the Title *Almighty*, ascrib'd to God the Father in the Creed ; which he understands of supreme Dominion, and absolute Sovereignty ; and that not only over *Creatures*, as other Interpreters do, but over the *Son* himself in his highest Capacity : And for fear it should not be understood, he expresses it very emphatically in these Words, Page 54. *That Sovereignty by which the Son himself, who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, in whom it pleased the Father, that all Fulness should dwell, even the Fulness of the Godhead bodily, was sent forth to recover, &c.* This is a novel and strained Sense of the Creed, unknown to the Antients, and for which there is no Proof in Scripture, nor indeed Colour. The Author's Principles, as to this Article, may be seen more at large in a polemical Treatise of his formerly published.* There he contends warmly for a *natural* Superiority of *Dominion* over the Son in his highest Capacity, and over the Holy Ghost of consequence : A Doctrine opposite to all Christian and Catholick Antiquity for the first three hundred Years and more.* All ancient

* Dr. Clarke's Observations on Dr. Waterland's Second Defence, 1724.

* See Dr. Waterland's Third Defence, printed 1724. c. 5 p. 108, &c.

tient Interpreters of the Creed take Care to except the Son and Holy Ghost, out of the Number of those Things that the Father bears Rule over, as he is *Almighty* : Or they take the Son and Holy-Ghost into Partnership in that Rule, in as much as the Father rules over all Things with and by them. Now might one not justly wonder that the *Apostles Creed* should be thought so very *plain* and *intelligible*, and yet the Expositor should mistake the Meaning twice in the very first Article, in *Father*, and in *Almighty* ? It never was the Intent or Meaning of the Creed, that the Father should be here called *Almighty*, or *Ruler over all*, in Opposition to, or Derogation of the *natural* Sovereignty of God the Son. For it is certain from Scripture,^a and acknowledged by all Antiquity,^b that God the Son is *Almighty* (is παντοκράτωρ) *Ruler over all*, as well as God the Father, and holds the same natural Sovereignty and supreme Dominion in common with him. And it is somewhat peculiar that the Author should mention the Title of *King of Kings and Lord of Lords*,^c as applied to Christ, which

^a See *Waterland's Sermons*, p. 227, 228, &c. First Defence, p. 451. Second Defence, p. 241.

^b See *Waterland's Sermons*, p. 230. Third Defence, c. 5.

^c Revel. vii. 14. xix. 16.

which is a distinguishing Character of God supreme, and yet endeavour to subject him in his highest Capacity to a higher Dominion. I may take Notice also, by the Way, of the Author's being misled here, and again, Page 60. by the Translations to say, that it *pleased* the Father *that in him should all Fulness dwell*,* when the Greek is, *in him all Fulness pleased to dwell*, or *it seemed good, that in him should all Fulness dwell*; which is elsewhere interpreted, *all the Fulness of the Godhead Bodily*. Very strong Expressions to signify his true and eternal Godhead,* and his absolute Exemption from any natural or necessary Subjection, which can belong to Creatures only. But I must not forget to take Notice of the Author's citing, 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28. to insinuate his Notion of the Son's *Subjection* in Scripture Phrases: *Shall again*, says he, *at the End deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, and be himself subject unto him that put all Things under him, that God may be all in all*. The easy, obvious, and natural Construction of the Place

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* Colop. i. 19. Ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ εὐδόκησε πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα κατοικῆσαι.

* Coloss. ii. 9.

* See Waterland's Sermons, p. 259. &c. Abr. Taylor's True Script. Doctr. p. 171, &c.

is this : That as all Things descend from the Father by the Son ; so by the same Son do all Things ascend up to the Father. The Father draws all his Elect unto himself by and through Christ their Head : As soon therefore as all Things are put under Christ, and become his, they will of Course become the Father's also, because Christ himself, as a Son, is referred up to the Father, and is subordinate to him as Head. I say, *subordinate*, rather than *subject*, (for the Greek *υποταγήσεται* will express either,) because the Creatures will be subject in quite another Manner and Degree than Christ can be. They will be subject as *Servants* to their *Lord*, as *Creatures* to their *Creator* : He will be subordinate only, as a *Son* to a *Father*, and as partaking of the same common Dominion with him over the whole Creation. The Son therefore is represented in the heavenly *Jerusalem*, as making but one *Temple* with the Father, and one *Light*,* and seated on the same *Throne*. It is absurd to imagine, that the Son will then be more subject than he is now, that his *triumphant* State shall come short of his *Militant*, and that he is to *decrease*, when all his Saints and Servants are to *increase*.

* Revel. xxi. 22.

• Revel. xxi. 23.

• Revel. xxii. 1, 3.

crease. No : But as he was always subordinate to the Father as a Son, so will he *then* be also,* when he shall have subdu'd all Enemies, and shall bring all his Friends with him, uniting them by himself, the Band and Cement of Union with the Father. Then shall he reign in Peace, and of his Kingdom shall be no End. His Father also shall reign by him and with him, and be acknowledged still as his Head and Father to whom he is referred. The Son will then be *all, and in all, and God over all*, as well as he is now,* and the Holy-Ghost with him ; and the Father yet more emphatically and eminently so, as *first* in *Order*, and Head of Both. Such is the Scale of Existences, such the Order and OEconomy by which all good Men, and good Angels too, ascend up, in the Holy-Ghost and by the Son, to the supreme Father, and so have their Union with him, and Life from him. There is nothing in all this, that intimates any *natural* or *necessary* Subjection of two of the divine Persons to one ;

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nor

* Ὑποταγέσεται δὲ ὅτι τὸτε ἄρχεται πειθαρχεῖν τῷ πατρὶ (ἀεὶ γὰρ τὰ ἀρετὰ αὐτῷ ποιεῖ πάντοτε) ἀλλ' ὅτι καὶ τότε ὑπακούει, ἐκ ἀναγκᾶς ὑπακοὴν ἔχων, ἀλλ' αὐτοπροαίρετον εὐπειθειαν· καὶ γὰρ δὲ λόγος ἐστίν, ἵνα ἀνάγκη ὑποταγῇ· ἀλλὰ υἱός ἐστιν, ἵνα προαιρέσει καὶ φιλοστοργία πεισθῇ. *Cyrill. Hierosol. Catech. xv. cap. 30. p. 240. Edit. Bened.*

* *Coloss. iii. 11. Rom. ix. 5.*

nor any *Inequality* of Nature or Perfections amongst them : But there is a natural Supremacy of *Order* belonging to God the Father ; and to him, as Fountain of the Deity, God the Son, and God the Holy-Ghost, proceeding from him, are referred.

THE *Exposition* proceeds, Page 56. to the second Article of the Creed : **And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.** And here the Author tells us, (Page 68.) that *Christ is in a singular, in a higher and more peculiar Manner*, (than Angels, Adam, or good Christians,) *the Son, and therefore the only Son of God.* Here is some Confusion in this Account, making *Son* and *only Son* equivalent and tantamount, as we shall see in the Sequel. But the Author goes on : *And that likewise upon different Accounts : First upon Account of his being conceived of the Holy-Ghost in a miraculous Manner, and therefore (said the Angel to the blessed Virgin) he shall be called the Son of God.* Luke i. 35. To which I answer, that supposing the Truth of the Fact, that he is called *Son of God*, on that Account, yet he is not therefore called *only Son*, as in the Creed, which answers to *only-begotten* (*μονογενής*) as appears by the Greek Copies. In the Respect here mentioned, Christ was not Son of God in a
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higher or more *peculiar* Manner than *Angels* or *Adam*. But besides that, I may upon the Authority of many of the *Ancients*, assert, that the *Power of the Highest* (δυνάμεις ὑψίστης) is a Name of the *Logos*, who before his Incarnation was *Son of God*; and therefore also the same *holy Thing*, after the Incarnation, was called, and was *Son of God*. This Construction prevailed for many Centuries, and may be met with in Christian Writers, as low as *Damascene* and *Theophylact*; and how much lower I need not enquire. If this Interpretation takes place, then the Pretence of Christ's being called *Son of God*, on Account of his being miraculously born of a Virgin, falls of Course.* Now we may go on with the *Exposition*.

THE *second* Reason assign'd by the Author, for calling Christ *Son of God*, is, *his being appointed to the special Office of Messiah*, according to *Joh. x. 36*. To which I again answer: Supposing the Fact, yet he is not on that Account called *only Son*, as in the Creed. But it cannot be proved that in *Joh. x. 36*. he called himself *Son of God*, on Account of his being appointed Messiah,

* See also another Construction of the Text, maintain'd by Dr. Sherlock, in his *Scripture Proofs* of Christ's Divinity, p. 162, &c.

Messiah, but on Account of his having come from Heaven, before he was *sent into the World*, referring to his antecedent Dignity, as Bishop *Bull* has observed at large.*

A *third* Account of our Lord's Sonship, assign'd by the Author, is, *his being the First-begotten from the Dead*, according to *Acts* xiii. 33. and *Rom.* i. 4. But neither could this be a Reason for calling him *only Son* of God, (if it might for *Son*,) because in that Respect he has many Brethren, *Children of God*, as being *Children of the Resurrection*, *Luke* xx. 36. However, it cannot be proved that he was called so much as *Son* of God on that Account. *Rom.* i. 4. says, *declared to be the Son of God with Power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the Resurrection from the Dead*; that is to say, manifested to be the eternal Son of God, according to his holy, spiritual, divine Nature, by his Resurrection.† His Resurrection, as he raised himself,‡ was a Demonstration of the *Divinity* of his Person, and which accordingly convinc'd St. *Thomas*, and made him

* *Vid. Bull. Judic. Eccl. Cath.* 316, 317. *Sherlock. Script. Proofs of Christ's Divinity.* p. 173.

† See *Bull. Judic. Eccl. Cath.* p. 318. *Sherlock's Scripture-Proofs of Christ's Divinity.* p. 162.

‡ *Joh.* ii. 19. x. 18.

him own him for his *Lord* and *God*.
 As to *St. Paul's* quoting *Psal. ii. 7. Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee*,
Acts xiii. 33. it is best explain'd by himself in *Rom. i. 4.* whereof we have been speaking; for by an easy Figure of Speech, not unusual in Scripture, a Thing is then said to be, when it appears. And as to *Eirst-begotten* from the Dead, it is not said *First-begotten of God* from the Dead, so that the Text is not pertinent: Besides, that were he a *Son* of the Father in that Respect because the Father raised him, he would be his *own* Son also, for the like Reason, because he raised himself.

A fourth Ground or Reason assign'd of our Lord's Sonship, is *his having all Judgment committed to him*, according to *John v. 22. ruling as a Son over his own House*, *Heb. iii. 6. being appointed Heir of all Things*, *Heb. i. 2.* But the answer is easy: He is not God's Son on Account of all Judgment being committed to him, being a *Son* before, and therefore all Judgment was committed to him: And he does not commence a Son by being appointed *Heir*, but he was appointed *Heir*, because he was antecedently *Son* of God.

UPON

* *Joh. xx. 28.*

* *Vid. Bull, ibid.* See also *Sherlock's Script. Proofs*, p. 178, &c.

* See *Bull, ibid.* p. 318. *Sherlock, ibid.* p. 182.

UPON the whole then we see, that none of the Reasons assign'd, sufficiently or certainly account for Christ's being called *Son of God*, much less for his being called *only Son*, or *Only-begotten*, as here in the Creed. In truth, there is but one Account which will *fully* answer for either, or *at all* answer for the latter; and that is, his being begotten of the Father before the World was. This the *Exposition* at length comes to, expressing it faintly, in low and lessening Terms; *having been from the Beginning, in the Bosom of the Father, a divine Person*. But St. John was not thus shy and reserv'd; he said plainly, *in the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*, John i. 1. The Son therefore from the Beginning was *God of God*: And this is that *peculiar*, that *high*, that *singular*, and divine Sonship which the Creed speaks of under the Title of *only Son*, and on Account of which he is as truly God, as any Son of Man is truly Man.

THE Author proceeds, p. 62. to account for the Name *Christ*, which he does very justly: But in the Sequel he says, *He was sent to reveal to us the whole Will of his Father, and bring us back unto God*, referring to *Luke iv. 18. Acts x. 38. And upon this*

this Account he is called the Word, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, viz. that Prophet that should come into the World, to shew unto Men the Way of Salvation, &c. The Account here given of the Name *Word* is low and flat, and suited only to a *Socinian Hypothesis*. It is evident that *St. John* meant more by it, (*Chap. i.*) since he speaks not of the *Word* being incarnate, till afterwards: And what he says of the *Word's* being in the Beginning, with God, &c. is not to be understood of the incarnate *Word*, but of the *Word* antecedent to the Incarnation. *Word* then is a Name for the divine pre-existent Nature of Christ. It would be tedious to enter into the Detail of this Matter, and therefore I shall content myself with referring to juster Accounts * of the Name *Word*. Only I may note that the Ancients in general, and *St. Ignatius* † in particular (who was *St. John's* Disciple) had much higher Thoughts of what the Name *Logos*, or *Word* imports, than the Expositor here mentions.

NEXT, as to the Title *Lord*, he tells us, Page 63. that *it denotes his having a Right of*

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* Bishop *Litchfield's* Sermon on *John* i. 14. *Vitringa* in *Apoc. calyps.* xix. 13. *Waterland's* Sermons, p. 5, 6.

† "Ὁς ἐστὶν αὐτῷ λόγος αἰδῖος, ὃν ἀπὸ σιγῆς πεπεληθὲν. *Ignat. Epist. ad Magnes.* c. 8. of this Place of *Ignatius*, See *Bull, D. F.* Sect. iii. c. 1. *Dr. Berriman's* Sermons, p. 49.

Dominion over us, by Virtue of his having redeemed and purchased us with his Blood, quoting *Heb. i. 2. Matth. xxviii. 18. Ephes. i. 17, 21. 1 Cor. xv. 27. Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11. Luke i. 33. Rev. xix. 16.* But this is not the Sense, or at least, not the *whole* Sense of *Lord* in the Creed; but it is low and lessening, as usual, detracting from the Honour due to our blessed Lord. The *Exposition* says nothing of Christ's being *Jehovah** and *God*, before the World was; nothing of his being *Lord* in right of Creation, the *Lord* that *in the Beginning laid the Foundation of the Earth*,^b and by *whom all Things were made*; • and who coming into the World, the World that was made by him, *came unto his own*. • It is observable, that the Eastern Creeds, in this Place, have *one Lord*, as they have *one God* in the first Article. The Form was taken from 1 *Cor. viii. 6. One God, the Father, of whom are all Things - - - and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all Things.* Now it is evident, that *Lord* in that Text, and therefore in the *Creed* also, has respect to Christ's Dignity, antecedent to the Redemption, and antecedent to the Creation itself,

* See *Pearson* on this second Article, p. 148.

^b *Heb. i. 10.*

* *John i. 3.*

* *John i. 10.* See *Waterland's Sermons*, p. 49.

itself, as he was *the Image of the invisible God, begotten before the whole Creation: For by him were all Things created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers: All Things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all Things, and by him all Things consist.* To this high, antecedent, super-eminent Dignity, belongs the Title of *Lord* in the Creed. For as to what Christ did in redeeming Mankind, and his new Dominion and Glory accruing from it, that comes afterwards in the following Articles: And it stands to Sense, that *Lord* in this Place, spoken of as prior to the Incarnation, should be understood of what was antecedent to it. It is the constant Manner of all the ancient Creeds, first to set forth the Θεολογία, the Doctrine of our Lord's Divinity, and then to descend regularly to the Οἰκονομία, his Incarnation, &c. And so if we look into *Ruffinus*, or other ancient Expositors,* we shall find it to be a ruled Case, a fix'd and settled Method with them. It is not justly interpreting a Creed, to put a Sense upon it only to serve an Hypothesis, against the known, certain Inten-

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* *Ruffin. in Symb.* p. 20. Edit. Oxon.

* *Cyrill. Hierosol. Catech. x. c. 4. 5, 6, &c.* See also *Bull. Judic. c. 5. p. 321.*

tion of the Compilers, and against the very Form, Structure, and Composition of the Creed itself: This is not shewing what Meaning the Words of the Creed really bear, but what they may be violently wrested to, to serve a Cause.

THE next Article of the Creed begins with the Words, **Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost.** Under this and the eighth Article, (which we shall consider both together,) the Author has express'd his Sentiments of the *Holy Ghost*, as far as he thought proper. The Subject is important, and will deserve considering. The Expofitor fays, (Page 113.) *What the metaphysical Nature of the Holy Spirit is, the Scripture has no where defin'd.* He made the like Observation of the *Holy Spirit* formerly in *Scripture Doctrine*, Prop. xxi. ^a and of the *Son* in Prop. xiii. ^b and of all the *three* Persons in Prop. iv. ^c However, what Scripture has not done, the Author himself has presumed to do; for he has not scrupled to determine, that the Father *alone* is *self-existent*; ^a and that neither the Son nor Holy Ghost are *self-existent*;

^a Clarke's Script. Doctrine, p. 290. first Edit. p. 258. second dit.

^b *Ibid.* Script. Doctrine, p. 272. first Edit. p. 239. second Edit.

Ibid. Script. Doctrine, p. 243. first Edit. p. 210. second Edit.

^c *Ibid.* pt. Doctrine, Prop. v. *Modest Plea*, p. 5.

tent ;* and he understands by self-existent, necessarily-existing ;• so that he has defined and determin'd (with or without Scripture) that the metaphysical Nature of the Holy Ghost is not necessary-existent, but contingent, precarious, or, in a Word, created. And, indeed, no Body can now make any Doubt of his making both *Son* and *Holy Ghost* Creatures, since he has plainly excluded, or however dropp'd, the *Worship* of Both. Such being the Principle he sets out with, it is obvious to imagine what Kind of Colours he must lay upon all such Texts of Scripture as speak highly and honourably of the Holy Ghost, above what belongs to Creatures. He begins with the famous Text beforemention'd, of *Luke* i. 35. interpreting it after the common Way, and maintaining that Christ is called *Son of God*, because conceived by the Holy Ghost, but not admitting the Inference from thence, that the Holy Ghost is *God*. I have intimated another Construction of the Text above : But if the common Construction be thought preferable, I may here insist upon it, that the Inference drawn from thence for the *Divinity* of the Holy Ghost is right and just. I shall express it in the Words of Bishop *Pearson*.*

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* Script. Doctrine, Prop. xii. xix. *Modest Plea* p. 6.

• *Clarke's Modest Plea*, p. 216, 217.

* *Pearson on the Creed*, Art. viii. p. 315.

“ HE by whose Operation Christ was
 “ conceived in the Womb of the Virgin,
 “ was no created Person; for by Virtue of
 “ that Conception, he was called the Son
 “ of God; whereas, if a Creature had been
 “ the Cause of his Conception, he had
 “ been in that respect the Son of a Crea-
 “ ture.” Now the Turn which the Au-
 thor takes (Page 67.) to evade the Force
 of this, and other yet more exprefs Scrip-
 ture Texts, is as follows; *Whatsoever God*
does of this Kind, from the Beginning to
the End of the whole Dispensation, the
Scripture generally represents as being done
by the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven:
And because what God does thus by his
holy Spirit, is in Event the same as if he
had done it immediately by himself, in his
own Person, hence the same individual
Works are frequently ascrib'd both to God
himself, even to the God and Father of
all, who works them by his Spirit, and at
the same Time they are ascrib'd also to the
Spirit by which God works them: This is
 easily said, but comes not up to the Pur-
 pose. Admit that the Father acts in and
 through his holy Spirit (which indeed is a
 Principle that the Catholicks themselves al-
 low and contend for) the more and oftener
 he is represented in Scripture as so acting,
 the

the less likely is it that the Holy Ghost should be a *Creature*. The Father acts by Angels, and by Men, *sometimes*, and often changing Hands: But when or where has he ever acted without his holy Spirit? Where ever he is present, (and he is present every where) he is present by his *Spirit*.^a And whenever he performs Wonders, or does any mighty Works, he does them by his *Spirit*.^b Whatsoever he knows, (as he knows all Things,) he knows them in, and with his Spirit: *For the Spirit searcheth all Things, yea the deep Things of God; and what Man knoweth the Things of a Man, save the Spirit of Man which is in him? even so the Things of God knoweth no one but the Spirit of God.*^c What kind of a *Creature* can this be, that is *in God*, as much as the Spirit of a Man is him, and which as intimately knows the Mind of God, as any Man knows his own Mind? What kind of a *Creature* can that be, which always is where God is, knows what God knows, does what God does? Indeed, when we consider the Scripture Representations of this Matter, the first and most natural Thought a Man might have, is, that *God* and

^a *Psal.* cxlii. 7, 12. See Dr. Knight's Sermons, p. 277.

^b *Acts* ii. 4, 17, 18, 33. *Rom.* xv. 19. *1 Cor.* ii. 4, 5, xii. 4, 8, 11. *Heb.* ii. 4.

^c *1 Cor.* ii. 10, 11. See Dr. Knight's Sermons, p. 282.

and the *Spirit of God*, are only different Names or Phrases for the same Person, and that God's acting by his Spirit, is only another Way of saying that he acts by himself: But then as there are some very express and uncontested Texts to prove the distinct Personality of the holy Spirit, there is no other Way left of coming up to Scripture Account, but by acknowledging that the holy Spirit of God, which is always and every where with God, and in God, is essential to God, and is God: And this indeed is the plain Doctrine of Scripture in several other Texts, besides what has been already mention'd. The holy Spirit is expressly called *Lord* by St. *Paul*,^a and that Lord is *Jehovah*:^b He is also *Lord of Hosts*, as is proved by another Application made by the same St. *Paul* of a Text of the Old Testament, to the Holy Ghost in the New. I know that some artificial Elusions have been contrived in answer to these Texts; and they have as often been replied to and confuted. In truth, the very Style of the Holy Ghost shews him to be Lord both of Heaven and Earth. *The Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the Work where-*

^a 2 Cor. iii. 17.

^b Exod. xxxiv. 34. See *Pearson* on this Argument, Art. viii. p. 316, 317.

^c Acts xxviii. 25, 26. compared with *Isaiah* vi. 9.

whereunto I have called them.^a Is this the Style of a Creature? Then again; *All these worketh that one and the self same Spirit, dividing to every Man severally as he will.*^b Should it not have been as *God wills*, rather than *he will*, were the Holy Spirit a Creature? Would it not be too familiar for any *Creature* whatever to take upon him to distribute the choicest Gifts of God, according to his own Pleasure? The *Exposition* somewhere says, that *to pray to inferior Beings is evidently needless, because God, we are sure, is always near, being himself every where present.*^c And may we not with as much Reason argue in this Case, that for God to bind himself up to the constant Use of any *Creature*, so as never to abide any where, nor to do any Thing but by him and with him, is evidently needless, being himself every where present, and able to do all Things? But that such a *Creature* should not only be thus constantly employed, but should act also with Authority paramount, and do as *he pleases*, in the high Dispensations of God, is altogether unaccountable. I shall only add further, that our Lord's joining the Holy Spirit together with the Father

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^a Acts xiii. 2.^b 1 Cor. xii. 11.^c Clarke's Exposit. of the Catech. p. 233.

and himself in the Form of Baptism, that sacred Form which is the Christian Rule, both of *Faith* and *Worship*, and which from the Infancy of the Church was so receiv'd, and universally complied with: This alone, were there nothing else, abundantly proves both the *Divinity* and *Worship* of the Holy Ghost. These Things premised, I now return to the Author of the *Exposition*, and to *Luke* i. 35. of which we were treating. If the common Construction be insisted upon, that Christ is called *Son of God*, because conceived by the Holy Ghost, then the Consequence is plain, that the Holy Ghost is *God*, as I before intimated. And if it be hereupon ask'd, why then is not Christ, in his human Nature called the Son of the Holy Ghost? the Answer is, because Scripture has not so called him. And if it be further ask'd why Scripture has not? It may be answer'd, because Scripture by calling him rather *Son of God*, thereby intimates to us, that the Holy Ghost is *God*, which is one good Reason: And another is, because Christ being *Son of God* (the Father) in a higher Capacity, it was the more proper to express both the Sonships by one and the same Name. This, I say, on the Supposition that the common Interpretation of *Luke* i. 35. be admitted; though as to my
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own Part, I incline rather to the ancient Construction abovemention'd : Which tho' it deprives us of this Argument of the *Divinity* of the Holy Ghost, yet accounts better for the Name of *Son of God*, and makes Scripture more *uniform*, as to the giving that Appellation to our Saviour Christ. I now proceed to some other Texts which are express for the *Divinity* of the third Person, and which the *Exposition* has been endeavouring to elude. One is, *Acts* v. 3, 4. of which the Expositor observes, Page 68. that *Ananias and Sapphira are charged with lying unto God when they lyed to the Holy Ghost, and with lying to the Holy Ghost when they lyed to Men inspir'd with the Holy Ghost, because lying to the Spirit by which God speaks, is in Effect and in Reality lying to God himself.* But why not rather, because the Holy Ghost is God, and so lying to the Holy Ghost is lying to God. The Train of the Argument is thus excellently well deduced by the judicious Bishop *Pearson*.

“ To lye unto the Holy Ghost is not to
 “ lye unto Men, because the Holy Ghost is
 “ not Man; and consequently not to lye
 “ unto any Angel, because the Holy Ghost
 “ is no Creature; but to lye unto God, be-

“ cause the Holy Ghost is God.”* This is the obvious, natural Construction of the Text, and therefore the true one: The other is forced and unnatural, and does not answer to the Antithesis or Opposition of the Text between *Men* and *God*. Let us put the Name of a created Angel, *Gabriel*, in the Place of Holy Ghost (supposed by our Adversaries to be a Creature) only to shew the Flatness and Impropriety of their Construction. *Why hath Satan filled thine Heart to lye to the Angel Gabriel? Thou hast not lyed unto Men, but unto God.* Should it not have been, *Thou hast not lyed unto Gabriel, but to God; or else, Thou hast not lyed unto Men, but unto Gabriel, nor to Gabriel, but to God?* In the other Way, the Sentence is plainly imperfect, and the Sense flat: And there is no Necessity at for admitting it, excepting only that some cannot endure that the Holy Ghost should be here called *God*, though he is abundantly proved to be *God*, from other Places of Scripture, and has been universally believ’d in, and worshipp’d as *God*, by the antient Christian Churches.

ANOTHER Text of the like Kind, is, *1 Cor. iii. 16. Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth*

* Pearson, Art. viii. p. 318.

dwelleth in you? To which may be added,
 1 Cor. vi. 19. *Know ye not that your Body
 is the Temple of the Holy-Ghost in you,
 which ye have of God. --- Therefore glo-
 rify God in your Body, and in your Spirit,
 which are Gods.* Now, if we are the
 Temple of God by the Inhabitation of
 God's Spirit, then is the Spirit of God,
 himself also God. The Reason is plain;
 because no Inhabitation of a *Creature*, can
 make the House inhabited a *Temple*; for
 a Temple is the House of God, not the
 House of a Creature as such. To this the
 Author of the *Exposition* replies; that *our
 Bodies are styl'd Temples*, (Temple, he
 means) *because they are Temples of the
 Holy Ghost, and God dwells in us by his
 holy Spirit.* This Solution might have ser-
 ved tolerably, had the Texts said only that
 our Bodies are the Temple of God, and
 not the Temple of the *Holy Ghost* too;
 which the Author, perhaps, did not con-
 sider. For let us suppose God the Father
 and any *Creature* to inhabit the same Per-
 son, that Person would indeed be the
 Temple of the Father, because he is God,
 but would be the *Dwelling* only, not the
 Temple, of the *Creature*, because he is not
 God. Seeing then that the Texts make
 us the Temple of God, and the Temple of
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the Holy Ghost too, it is manifest that the Holy Ghost inhabiting us, as *his Temple*, is God, as well as the Father.

THE *Exposition* goes on to elude several other Texts, observing that *the Miracles which our Lord himself worked, during the Course of his Ministry, are ascribed sometimes to the Father, which dwelt in him; and sometimes to the Spirit, which God gave not by Measure to him*, p. 68. Yes; it is more than once intimated in Scripture that the Father himself constantly dwelled in Christ,* and did the Works which Christ did. Now, I should be glad to know of those that make the Holy Ghost a *Creature*, what Occasion there could be for any other invisible Agent to work Miracles, when the Father himself who could do infinitely more, and who really work'd all, was there working. And what Sense is there in God's giving the Spirit, a *Creature*, without Measure, as if any Creature could be infinite, or, as if the Father himself, working at the same Time, might not infinitely supersede all creaturely Assistance. Our Blessed Lord somewhere† says, *if any Man love me, he will keep my Words, and my Father will love him, and we (the Father and he) will come*

* Joh. x. 38. xiv. 10, 11, 20. xvii. 21, 23. † Joh. xix. 23.

come unto him and make our Abode with him. In the same Chapter he speaks also of the Holy Ghost, as of *another Comforter*, to *abide* with the same *for ever*. Three Persons in all, all abiding, all comforting invisibly, and all inhabiting the same Temple. But what Occasion could there be for either the *second* or *third*, if they be *Creatures*? or what *Comfort* in them, while the *first* alone, the *God of all Comfort*, both could and would supply every Thing, and the other two, in Reality, nothing? These and other the like Scripture Texts are easily accounted for, upon the Principles of the Christian Church: But what to make of them on any other Principles, I see not. If it be said, that God may employ what Agents, or what Instruments he pleases, Angels or Men, and need not always act *immediately* in Person, that is true, but not pertinent to the Point in hand: For in the Cases I have been speaking of, God the Father is supposed to be present in Person, and to act immediately by himself, and yet others are represented as assisting and acting with him.

WE may now take leave of these two Articles of the Creed, and of the Creed itself. For as to other Articles of flighter Moment, the *Exposition*

* Joh. xvi. 16, 26.

sition, I think, has done Justice to them, and may be read with Instruction, and Pleasure. Yet for fear of imbibing false Doctrines, along with true, it would be the safer Way to read Bishop *Pearson's* Exposition of the same Creed, which is sound, learned, and judicious quite through, and one of the best Books in our Language. And as to those who have less Time to spare, or who may desire to be competently instructed in the Creed at an easier and cheaper Rate, I would particularly recommend to them Dr. *Bishop's* very useful *Abridgment* of Bishop *Pearson*, now lately published, for Benefit of common Readers.

IV.

THE Exposition passes on from the *Creed* to the *Ten Commandments*. And under Commandment the first, he observes, *p. 150.* *That it supposes it as a Thing known by the Light of Nature and Reason, that there is but one God, one eternal, omnipresent, self-sufficient Being, --- Who in the New Testament is set forth to us under this still more particular Character, that he is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Here very distinct Things are, by too artificial a Confusedness, mix'd and blended together.

together. That there is a God, is certainly known by the Light of Nature and Reason: That there is but *one God*, is *probably* argued from Reason and ancient Tradition, and is *certainly* proved from Scripture. But that the one God is the Father *only*, exclusive of all other Persons, is not known by the Light of Nature to be *true*, but is known by the Light of Scripture to be *false*; and is by all the ancient Churches accounted *Heresy*. It is *judaizing*,* after *Praxeas*, *Noetus*, *Sabellius*, *Paul of Samosata*, *Arius*, and *Eunomius*; and is not Christian Doctrine.† Reason tells us there is a God, without saying who is: Scripture determines it to the *Jehovah*: And the same Scripture abundantly declares that the *Jehovah* is Father, Son, and Holy-Ghost. The Knowledge of this we owe to Revelation only, which contradicts not *Reason*, but advances beyond it, and makes much larger Discoveries. The Light of Nature and Reason can go but a very little Way in *divine* Things, with any Certainty

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* *Judaica fidei ista res, sic unum Deum credere, ut Filium annumerare ei nolis, & post Filium, Spiritum. Quid enim erit inter nos & illos nisi differentia ista? Quid opus Evangelii, quæ est Substantia Novi Testamenti statuens Legem & Prophetas usque ad Johannem, si non exinde Pater, & Filius, & Spiritus, tres crediti, unum Deum sistunt?* Tertull. adv. Prax. sub. fin.

† See *Waterland's First Defence*, p. 352, 355, &c. *Second Defence*, 460, &c.

tainty. The *Bible* is our best Metaphysics, and what alone can give us any reasonable Satisfaction about the Object of our *Faith*, or *Worship*. Had we no Revelation to go to, we might be allowed to fit down and guess, and might guess as wide as the antient Pagans did. But to advance natural Light, that is, *Pagan* Darknes, in Opposition to Scripture Evidence, is setting up *human* Conjectures against *divine* Truths; lighting up a Candle in the Face of the Sun. The introducing false Maxims of Philosophy into Religion, has done infinite Mischief to the Church of God.* It is making Scripture bend to human Inventions, and is contriving a kind of motley Religion, Part Pagan and Part Christian, instead of the Religion of Christ. If any Man imagines he can by *natural* Light (which in this Respect is no Light) determine the Question about the Plurality of Persons in the Godhead, he will be widely mistaken. Scripture alone, with proper Helps to understand Scripture, must decide this great Question. All Wisdom here, going above what is written, or what is evidently deduced from it, is vain Wisdom, and will prove no better than an Illusion,
or

* See Dr. Berriman's Sermons, p. 93. &c. Waterland's first Defence, p. 327, &c.

or an Infatuation to every Man that trusts to it. But I pass on.

HE concludes what he had more to say under the *first Commandment*, with some Reflections upon Idolatry. And in Page 154. he speaks of Some that have *taught Men to apply themselves to Angels --- and to the Blessed Virgin, whom, (as he says) by a profane Ambiguity, they affect to style the Mother of God.* Had he levell'd his Rebuke against the *Romish* Abuses of that Style and Title, and against the extravagant Honours thereupon paid to the blessed Virgin, all had been right. But he has so worded his Censure, as to charge the Title itself with a *profane Ambiguity*, and so through the Sides of the Romanists, as I conceive, reflects unhandsomely upon all the Churches of Christ. His Quarrel is with the very Name and Title of *θεοτόκος*, *Mother of God*, which accordingly he changes, Page 70, into *κυριοτόκος*, *Mother of Lord*; for no Reason that I can see, except it be that he had rather Christ should be called *Lord*, than *God*; interpreting *Lord* in a low and puny Sense, as observed above. However, as to *θεοτόκος*, or *Mother of God* (which he is pleased to charge with *profane Ambiguity*) he should have considered that it is no Piece of *Popery* but much older, being

indeed pure and primitive Christianity. It is expressive of a very great and important Truth, that Christ who is Son of God in one Nature, is Son of *Mary* also in another, and is both *God* and *Man*, while one Christ. The Phrase itself, of *Mother of God*, or Word Θεοτόκος, thus applied, was the common Language of the Church about the Middle of the fourth Century : And it may be run up higher by *Eusebius*, and *Alexander* of *Alexandria*, and *Origen*, to the Year 245, or the Middle of the third Age. And equivalent Expressions may be carried up through antient Writers to the Gospel-times. *Irenæus*, who was a Disciple of *Polycarp*, who was Scholar to the Apostles, scruples not to say of the Virgin, that she *bare God** within her, which is as strong an Expression as *Mother of God*. And *Ignatius*, St. *John*'s Disciple, says plainly, *Jesus Christ our God was conceiv'd of Mary*,^b which is tantamount. But *Isaiah* and St. *Matthew*^c were before them all, in affirming that the Virgin should bring forth *Emanuel*, that is, *God with us*, God incarnate ; which comes to the same with calling her

* Portaret Deum. *Iren.* l. v. c. xix. p. 316.

^b 'Ο θεός ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς ὁ χριστός ἐκνοφορήθη ὑπὸ Μαρίας. *Ignat. ad Ephes.* c. xviii. p. 18.

^c *Isa.* vii. 14. *Matt.* i. 23.

her *Mother of God*, and is cited for that Purpose by *Eusebius*,^a where he gives her that Title. Attempts have been made to elude the true and antient Meaning of these Texts, but to little Purpose. The same Sense may most probably be assign'd to *Luke* i. 43. as Bishop *Bull* has observed. For *Mother of Lord* there may mean *Mother of God*, since the Title of *Lord* belongs to Christ chiefly as he is our *God*; and so *St. Thomas* join'd both together. In short, I see no Reason why any one should be offended, at the Title of *Mother of God*, unless he be offended also at calling Christ *God*, for that implies it. *Julian* indeed was pleased to deride the Christians for using it.^d But then, very consistently, he blamed them as much for believing in, and speaking of Christ as *God*. I observe, that the Author of the *Exposition* studiously avoids giving the Name of *God* to Christ, substituting *divine Person* every where,^e where he should have said *God* according to the Text. If he was afraid of committing a *profane Ambiguity* in

^a *Euseb. de vit. Constant.* l. 3. c. 43.

^b See *Pearson*, Articl. ii. p. 130. *Vitring. in Isa.* vii. 14. *Walterland's Sermons*, p. 201. *Dr. Knight's Sermons*, p. 150.

^c *Bull. Oper. Posth.* p. 156.

^d *Julian in Cyrill.* l. viii. p. 262, 276. Edit. Lips.

^e Page 59, 64, 65.

in calling Christ *God*, I should not wonder at it : His own good Sense might lead him to think, that it would be profaning the *high Name*, to call any one *God* in such a Manner, and to mean no more by it than his Principles allow'd him to do. But if this was his Thought, as is not improbable, I cannot but admire still, that the same good Sense did not lead him to reflect, that the holy Prophet *Isaiah*, St. *John*, and St. *Paul* (Men of excellent Sense, and inspired too) had very solemnly called Christ *God*, and would have been as much afraid of any *profane Ambiguity*, as others can be. Wherefore I may have Leave to conclude, that they really understood Christ to be *God* in the same high Sense that the Father himself is. But this by the Way.

I MEET with nothing farther that wants a Remark, till I come to Page 293. of the *Exposition*, where the Author lays down his Sentiments of the solemn Form of Baptism, *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost* : Not in the Name of *God*, and *Christ*, and the *Spirit*, as if *God* belong'd to one only. *By this Form*, says the Expofitor, *we dedicate ourselves solemnly to the Service and Worship of God our Father, who created us.* Why not *God the Father*, as the Form itself directs

rects, to shew the Relation *Father* has to *Son* presently following? But this is slight. What is more material, since he owns Baptism to be the dedicating ourselves to the *Service* and *Worship* of one of the Persons, why so partial, as not to admit the same Meaning and Significancy of the same Rite in respect of the other two Persons join'd with him? Certainly, our Blessed Lord, who was always exceedingly tender of his Father's Honour, could and would have made such a Distinction as this Author does, had there been Ground for it, or had he not intended that *all Men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father*; not excluding the third Person from the like Honour, being the *Spirit of Both*,* and with whom they are as intimate as *Man* with his own Mind.* Why should we separate what God has not separated? And why should we distinguish where our Lord has not distinguished? The Exposition adds: *To the Obedience and Imitation of Christ the Son of God who redeemed us: And to the Direction and Guidance of the Holy Spirit, which sanctifies us.* Low and lame: Truth so far, but not the whole Truth. What follows

* Rom. viii. 9. Gal. iv. 6. 1 Pet. i. 11. Acts xvi. 7. Phil. i. 19.

* 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.

follows is a Mistake. *And accordingly all the antient baptismal Creeds, in the primitive Church, were Paraphrases upon this Form.* The ancient Creeds, generally, were not paraphrases upon this Form, but Supplements to it,* by the Addition of other Articles over and above that of the Trinity. Or when they had any Thing of Paraphrase upon the Form itself, they did not paraphrase *accordingly*, not according to the Sentiments of this Writer. But Explications and Paraphrases upon the *Form* of Baptism, and upon the *Creeds* too, are to be sought for in the Remains of the primitive Writers, who recite the Form and the Creeds, and declare the Faith of all the Churches in their Time. The oldest Writer extant who takes Notice of the Form of Baptism, is *Justin the Martyr*, who lived and wrote within forty or fifty Years after *St. John*. He in answer to the Charge of *Atheism*, a Charge made against the Christians, as owning no God at all, twice affirms and solemnly testifies of the Christians at large, that they worshipped the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*. In other Parts of his Writings he as expressly declares and testifies that they worshipped

* See *Waterland's Sermons*. p. 321, &c.

shipped *God* only.* Put those two Positions, or Facts together, and they make a compleat *Paraphrase* or Comment on the Form of Baptism; shewing that *Father, Son,* and *Holy Ghost*, into whom Christians were baptiz'd, were understood to be the one God of the Christians. The like might be shewn of the Christian Writers (besides other collateral Testimonies) all along downwards, and has been often shewn; so that I chuse rather to refer* than to repeat. Much also may be pleaded from the Form itself, the Design and Circumstances of it. But all taken together with the other Scripture Proofs of the Divinity of the three Persons, and the immediate Doctrine and Practice of the ancient Churches, all confirming the same Thing, make so compleat a Demonstration of what we contend for, that nothing plainer or fuller can be rationally desired. It is a weak Way of reasoning to argue only from the Simplicity and Brevity of ancient Creeds, as if there were a Necessity

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* See *Waterland's Sermons*, p. 299, &c. *Berriman's Sermons*, p. 66, 67.

* *Stillingsfleet's Vindication of the Trinity*, c. ix. p. 177, &c. *Waterland's Sermons*, p. 299, &c. *Taylor's True Script. Doct. of the Trinity*, p. 100, &c.

* See *Stillingsfleet*, *ibid.* p. 219, &c. *Waterland*, *ibid.* p. 293, &c. *Taylor*, *ibid.* p. 93, &c. *Vitringa Observ. Sacr. Tom. ii.* c. xxii. p. 813, &c.

of explicitly opening every important Scripture Doctrine in a short Memorandum. Creeds were only brief Notes, Hints, or Minutes of the Faith of the Church, which the *Catechists* were to unfold and explain at large. St. *Austin* has given a good Account of this Matter, whose Words I have thrown into the Bottom of the Page, for the Satisfaction of the learned Reader.*

AFTER treating of the Sacrament of *Baptism*, the *Exposition* proceeds (Page 299.) to speak of the other Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*. Under this Article he gives some Account of the *Satisfaction* made by the Death of Christ for the Sins of Mankind, as he had before also done in his Comment upon the fourth Article of the Creed,

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* Est autem Catholica Fides in Symbolo nota Fidelibus, memoriaque mandata, quantâ res passa est brevitate sermonis: Ut incipientibus atque lactentibus eis qui in Christo renati sunt, nondum Scripturarum divinarum diligentissima & spiritali tractatione atque cognitione roboratis, paucis verbis credendum constitueretur, quod multis verbis exponendum esset proficientibus, & ad doctrinam certa humilitatis atque charitatis firmitate surgentibus. Sub ipsis ergo paucis verbis in Symbolo constitutis, plerique Hæretici venena sua occultare conati sunt: Quibus restitit & resistit divina misericordia per spiritales viros, qui Catholicam Fidem non tantum in illis verbis accipere & credere, sed etiam domino revelante intelligere atque cognoscere meruerunt. Scriptum est enim, nisi credideritis, non intelligetis. Sed tractatio Fidei ad muniendum Symbolum valet: non ut ipsa pro Symbolo Gratiam Dei consequentibus memoria mandanda & reddenda tradatur; sed ut illa quæ in Symbolo retinentur, contra Hæreticorum insidias auctoritate Catholica & munitione defensione custodiat. Augustin. de Fid. & Symbol. c. i. p. 151. Tom. vi. Edit. Bened.

Page 74. The Sum of his Account of the high and great Attonement is, that *Christ was himself without Spot, and sinless*; and therefore his voluntary *Offering of himself was acceptable to God, and efficacious to procure Pardon to Penitents*. Now, supposing Christ to be a *Creature* only, it is not conceivable how he could have such a Degree of Merit, by any Thing he could do or suffer, as thereby to purchase Pardon for a whole World of Sinners. Can a Creature have any Merit at all with God? or could he modestly presume so far upon it, as to offer himself as a Satisfaction to divine Justice for sinful Men? As to his being *sinless*, it was his bounden Duty to be so; for every Creature, for his own Sake, is strictly oblig'd to abstain from *Sin*. As to his making himself a *voluntary* Offering, how could he refuse what God had *appointed*, and therefore *commanded*? It could be *voluntary* only as chearfully obeying what was laid upon him, and what he could not without Sin decline. Besides, that since the Reward for this Service was to be so exceeding high and extraordinary, in as much as he was to be preferr'd before Angels and Archangels, before all other Creatures whatever, and even to be ador'd and worshipp'd by them all for doing it; it seems that his

submitting to some light and short Afflictions could have no such exceeding Merit in it, as over and above his own Rewards, to purchase also Rewards for a whole sinful World. But the Author of the Exposition observes, and insists upon it, that *the Method wherein, and the Terms upon which God will extend his Mercy and Compassion towards Sinners, this depends entirely upon the good Pleasure and Wisdom of God*, Page 300. which is as much as to say, that God has appointed, and has accepted of this Method of Salvation by Jesus Christ: But that this Method (so understood) carries any proper *Satisfaction, Merit, or Attainment* in it, appears not. It is admitting indeed the *Name* of Satisfaction, but is denying the *Thing*. The Question is not what God might do in the Right of his absolute Sovereignty, as to pardoning of Sinners; neither is it about what infinite Wisdom might have found out, as to any other Methods of doing it: But the Question is, whether, when God has pitch'd upon a Method of *Expiation*, which according to Scripture Accounts does carry real Merit and Satisfaction in it, it may be right so to understand and interpret that Method, as to take from it the very Foundation upon which the true Notion of Satisfaction or Merit

Merit is built. It is very easy to say, that God has accepted, and is satisfied; for the same Persons would say, that God might be appeased, or satisfied without any Offering for Sin at all, if he so pleased: But the Scriptures seem to lay a particular Stress and Emphasis upon the *Propitiation* made by the Blood of Christ, as if there were some intrinsic Merit, both real and great, in it; which is what wants to be accounted for, upon the Principles of the *Exposition*. But leaving this Matter, which has fallen in only by the Way, I proceed to note some Things of what the Author has said more directly upon the Subject of the Eucharist.

HE observes, Page 304. that *the Reason why ancient Christian Writers called the Lord's Supper frequently a Sacrifice, and an unbloody Sacrifice, is not because they imagined it to be literally a Sacrifice, but because it was an Act of Christian Worship, succeeding in the Place of Jewish Sacrifices. By the same Figure of Speech, Praise and Thanksgiving are likewise called a Sacrifice.* This is not a true Account of the *ancient Writers*, nor of the Reason of the Name *Sacrifice* given to the Eucharist. Bishop Burnet is more accurate, who after mentioning the Reason here assign'd as one, presently adds: "In two
" other

“ other Respects it may be also more strictly called a *Sacrifice*: One is because there is an *Oblation* of Bread and Wine made in it, which being sanctified are consumed in an Act of Religion: To this many Passages in the Writings of the Fathers do relate. — Another Respect in which the *Eucharist* is called a *Sacrifice*, is, because it is a Commemoration and a Representation to God, of the Sacrifice that Christ offer'd for us on the Cross; in which we claim to that, as to our Expiation, and feast upon it as our *Peace-Offering*, according to that ancient Notion that Covenants were by a *Sacrifice*, and were concluded in a Feast on the Sacrifice. Upon these Accounts, we do not deny but that the *Eucharist* may be well called a *Sacrifice*: But still it is a commemorative Sacrifice, and not propitiatory, &c.” *

THE learned *Pfaffius* having well consider'd and examin'd this Matter, declares, or rather confesses it ridiculous to imagine that the Ancients by their Oblation and Sacrifice, meant no more than Prayer.† But

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* Bishop Burnet's Exposit. of the Articles, Art. xxxi. p. 350.

† *Dicere etiam, veteres per Oblationem & Sacrificium nihil intelligere aliud quam Preces, oppido esset ridiculum, ostenderetque Animum aut veritati non cedentem eandemque dissimulantem, aut nulla Ecclesiastica Antiquitatis notitia imbutum.* Pfaff. de Oblat. Consecr. Euchar. p. 50.

a full Discussion of this Question may be seen in *Johnson's Unbloody Sacrifice*, where the Testimonies of the Ancients, relating to this Matter, are produc'd and consider'd at large.

THE *Exposition* rightly interprets *verily and indeed taken, &c.* of a real *Participation of the Benefits purchased by Christ's Death*, Page 311. The Body and Blood of Christ are taken and receiv'd by the Faithful, not *substantially*, not *corporally*, but *verily* and *indeed*, that is *effectually*. The sacred Symbols are no bare Signs, no untrue Figures of a Thing absent : But the Force, the Grace, the Virtue, and Benefit of Christ's Body broken, and Blood shed, that is of his Passion, are really and effectually present with all them that receive worthily. This is all the *real Presence* that our Church teaches. The *Exposition* says, in the same Page, that when our Lord *was discoursing about Men's imbibing, digesting, and practising his Doctrine, he even then called it eating his Flesh and drinking his Blood*, according to *John vi. 35, 56*. But there, as I conceive, the Author is mistaken ; though it must be own'd that some very judicious Moderns have gone before him in it. Whoever will attentively read that Chapter over, may easily enough per-

perceive, that our Lord is not there speaking either of his *Doctrine* then taught, or of the *Eucharist* to be instituted, but of the great *Attonement* to be made by his Passion. The *eating* his *Flesh*, and *drinking* his *Blood*, there mention'd, mean the having a Part in that Attonement, being Partakers of the Benefit of Christ's Death and Satisfaction. By this and this only we live; without it we die. It is by our Lord's meritorious Death and Passion that Men are saved, as many as are saved: And were it not for that, no Flesh could be saved. *Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood*, except you participate of the Virtue and Merit of his Body broken, and Blood shed, that is, of his Passion, *you have no Life in you*. Such as receive *worthily* and *perseveringly* the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, thus participate, but not they only: For all that have ever lived and died in God's Favour, from the Beginning of the World, have eaten and drank Christ's Flesh and Blood, have participated of the Benefits of his Passion; and in that they yet live and stand, and not in any Works or Merits of their own. This I take to be the Doctrine of *John* vi. which, out of Figure, comes plainly to this, that there is no Salvation given unto Men but in and through

through the Satisfaction of Christ. The *Exposition* proceeds (Page 312.) to explain the **Benefits** of the worthy receiving the Lord's Supper, thus express'd in the Catechism: **The strengthening and refreshing of our Souls by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our Bodies are by the Bread and Wine.** The Comment hereupon is, *As Impenitency is the Death, and Sins are the Diseases of the Soul, so a Habit of Virtue is its Health and Life, and religious Acts are its Food and Nourishment.* True in a certain Sense, but not very well fitted to our present Purpose: For the *Catechism* is here speaking, not of the Efficacy of Habits of Virtue to Salvation (which after all are *Conditions* only, and have no proper *Efficacy*) but of the Force and Power of the great Atonement. The Expositor therefore should rather have said thus: "As the being excluded from having
 " a Part in the Merits of Christ's Passion is
 " the *Death*, and the Neglect of the
 " Means of Grace is the *Disease* of the
 " Soul; so the participating of the Merits
 " of Christ's Passion is its *Health* and *Life*,
 " and the Use of the proper Means is its *Food*
 " and *Nourishment*." And thus we come to the Use of *worthy receiving*, the Means instituted, and one of the most effectual,

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and most direct of any. It supposes, or takes in Virtue, moral Virtue, with it, and goes far beyond it, uniting us to Christ, which moral Virtue alone never can do; for it is by *Faith*, by *Grace*, that we are saved.

I WISH the Author had here spoken a little more plainly of the divine Graces going along with the worthy Reception of the holy Communion, that so Persons coming to it might have the more suitable Idea of it, and Veneration for it. He speaks of religious Acts having the *Promise of procuring Blessing and Assistance from God*; which is too dry and general. Our 25th Article, speaking of both the Sacraments says, *They are effectual Signs of Grace, and God's good Will towards us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our Faith in him.* The Author of the *Exposition* justly condemns those, who think *that at the receiving of the Sacrament their Sins are in Course pardon'd, to the Commission of which they return regularly again.* But such as these are *unworthy* Receivers, not receiving with a true penitent Heart or lively Faith. Something should have been added about the real Remission of Sins convey'd and sealed

sealed to the *worthy* Receiver, notwithstanding. For though the Grant be revocable, in this Case, upon the Person's returning to his old Sins, yet it is a real and a present Grant; like as the Lord, in the Gospel, really *forgave* his Servant all his *Debt*, but revoked the Grant upon that Servant's new Misbehaviour. The Author also justly condemns the *unintelligible Notion of a certain Grace or Virtue annex'd to the material Elements, or to the mere external Participation of them, rather after the Nature of a Charm, than of a religious Action.* But then, to avoid or obviate another as dangerous an Extreme, something should have been inserted to signify that when the *Recipient* is fitly qualified, and duly disposed, there is a salutary *life-giving* Virtue annex'd to the Sacrament; which in one of our Church's Homilies is thus express'd: " In the Supper
 " of the Lord there is no vain Ceremony,
 " no bare Sign, no untrue Figure of a
 " Thing absent; but as the Scripture saith,
 " the Table of the Lord, the Bread and
 " Cup of the Lord, the Memory of
 " Christ, the Annunciation of his Death;
 " yea, the Communion of the Body and
 " Blood of the Lord, in a marvellous Incorporation, which by the Operation of

“ the Holy Ghost (the very Bond of our
 “ Conjunction with Christ) is through
 “ Faith wrought in the Souls of the Faith-
 “ ful ; whereby not only their Souls live
 “ to eternal Life, but they surely trust to
 “ win their Bodies a Resurrection to Im-
 “ mortality.” * The Author of the *Expo-
 sition* has taken a commendable Care in re-
 commending *virtuous* Dispositions as Quali-
 fications proper for the receiving the Sacra-
 ment ; but then he seems to have been too
 sparing in setting forth the spiritual Advan-
 tages and Blessings coming down from above
 through this Channel of Grace and Pardon,
 upon the *worthy* Receiver. He says (Page
 314.) that thereby *we* renew our Part in
 the Christian Covenant, *we* strengthen our
 Faith, *we* increase our Hope, *we* enlarge
 the Bond of universal Love : And all this
 he seems to account for in a *natural* Way,
 according to what he had observ’d, Page 312.
 of religious Acts, that they *naturally im-
 prove and establish Men in virtuous Prac-
 tice* : As if virtuous Practice were all, and
 the Sacraments were to be consider’d only
 as a *Means* to that *End*. But in reality the
 Sacraments are additional Improvements up-
 on virtuous Practices, and are of nearer
 and more *immediate* Efficacy for the uni-
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* Homily on the Sacrament, Part 1.

ting us to God and Christ. They supply where the other falls short; they relieve where the other cannot, they finish what the other but begins, our Justification and Salvation. I know not how to approve what the Exposition says, Page 182. of the two *Sacraments*, in common with other positive Institutions, that *they have the Nature only of Means to an End, and that therefore they are never to be compared with Moral Virtues*. I cannot understand why positive Institutions, such as the two Sacraments especially, should be so slightly spoken of. *Moral Virtues* are rather to be consider'd as a *Means* to an End, because they are *previous* Qualifications for the Sacraments, and have no proper Efficacy towards procuring Salvation till they are improv'd and render'd acceptable by these *Christian Performances*. By *Moral Virtues* only, we shall never ordinarily come at Christ, nor Heaven, nor to the Presence of God: But by the Help of the *Sacraments* superadded, to crown and finish the other, we may arrive to Christian Perfection, that then *we may dwell in Christ and Christ in us; we are one with Christ and Christ with us; as our Church Offices express it*. And what can be meant by saying, or intimating, that
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the worthy receiving of the holy Communion is *never to be compared with moral Virtues*? What is the Exercise of *Moral Virtue*, but the Exercise of *Obedience* to some Law, suppose of Charity or Justice? But the worthy receiving of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, is at once an Exercise of *Obedience* to the Law of Christ, and of *Faith*, of *Worship*, and of *Repentance*, and carries in it the strongest Incitement not only to all *Moral Virtues*, but all *Christian Graces*. Besides, I see but very little Reason for slighting *positive Institutions* in the general, in Comparison of *Moral Virtue*. It was the Breaking a *positive Precept* that turn'd the first Man out of Paradise, and entail'd Mortality upon the whole Kind. *Abraham* was a Man of great *Moral Virtues*, and yet they were not the Things that he was chiefly celebrated for. One Instance of his Obedience to a *positive Command* has made his Name more famous both in Heaven and on Earth, than all his *Moral Virtues* put together. The Truth of the Case, as I conceive, lies here: The *Love of God* is the *first* and *great* Commandment: And Obedience to his *positive* Institutions is an *Exercise* of that Love; and it is sometimes the *noblest* and *best* Exercise of it, shewing the
greater

greater Affection, and prompter Resignation to the divine Will. He is a proud and a fawey Servant that will never obey his Master but where he sees the *Reason* of the Command. It is Reason enough for obeying, to every modest and humble Servant, that his Lord, so much wiser than he, and to whom he owes all his Service, has commanded it. On this Account there may be, in some Cases, greater Excellency, and more real Virtue in obeying *positive* Precepts, than in any *moral* Virtue. In short, if the Love of God be *moral Virtue*, such Obedience, being an Act of *Love*, is an Act of moral Virtue, and then there is no Ground for the Distinction: But if there must be a Distinction made, then let one be called *moral Virtue*, and the other *Christian Perfection*, and let any Man judge which should have the Preference. Indeed, they should not be opposed, since both are necessary, and are perfective of each other. But if they must be opposed and compared, I say, *moral Virtue* is but the Handmaid leading to the Door of Salvation, which the *Use* of the *Sacraments* at length opens, and lets us in. Thus much I have thought proper to plead in Behalf of the two venerable Sacraments of our most holy Religion; and shall only add, that any
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Contempt of them will be as much a Bar to Salvation as the Contempt of *moral Virtues*, and may, for any Thing I know, be more provoking to God, as carrying greater Defiance in it, and having less Temptation to it. The Exposition observes justly enough, that the Sacraments are of *no Use or Benefit without moral Virtues, nor can be in any Degree equivalent for the Want of them*. Which is a proper Caution to such as are weak enough (if any such there be) to trust to the outward Performance, to *unworthy* receiving. But there is another Sort of Persons, who valuing themselves, as being in the Main good *moral* Men, are apt to flight and disesteem this positive Institution, this most sublime Ordinance, this most excellent Worship, and hold themselves safe without frequent Communion, or perhaps without ever communicating. And they should be told, that their *moral Virtues*, be they real or otherwise, can be of *no Use or Benefit* without this Sacrament, nor in any Degree *equivalents* for the Want of it. But to pass on.

IT is but a very obscure and insufficient Account which the *Exposition* gives of a famous Text, 1 Cor. x. 16. *The Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ, the Communion of all*

all the Members of Christ's Body one with another ? So stand the Text, and Comment in the *Exposition*. But then what shall we make of the Words immediately preceding, *The Cup of Blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ ?* The plain Meaning is, that there is in the Eucharist a real Communication, or Participation of Christ's broken Body, and Blood shed, that is, of his Passion, that is of the Attonement made by it, in which we actually partake as often as we worthily partake of this holy Sacrament. How our Church understands this Text, may be seen in our twenty-eighth Article, which quotes the very Text in these Words ; *The Bread which we break is a partaking of the Body of Christ, and likewise the Cup of Blessing is a partaking of the Blood of Christ*. If we look into our older *English* Versions, as *Parker's* and *Tindale's*, we shall there find the Text thus rendered : *Is not the Cuppe of Blessynge which we blesse, partakinge of the Bloude of Christ ? Is not the Bready which we breake, partakynge of the Bodye of Christ ?* I know not whether the *Geneva* Translators were not the first that changed *Partaking* into *Communion* ; thereby obscuring, in some Measure, the Sense. But they subjoin'd a Note to clear
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it, which note is this ; *The effectual Badge of our Conjunction and Incorporation with Christ.* They should have added, *By our partaking together of the Merits of his Death or Crucifixion :* Which would well cohere with the 17th Verse immediately following : *Because the Bread is one, we being many are one Body : For we are all Partakers of that one Bread.* So I render the Text with the late learned Dr. *Wells.*

I HAVE now run through the most exceptionable Parts of the *Exposition*, such as appeared to me of greatest Moment : And the Reader will observe that they all relate to Points of Faith, Worship, or pure Theology. I have no Fault to find with the Author's *Morality*, which is excellent : And I could heartily wish that his profess'd Followers in other Matters where he differs from us, would at least follow him in that which both he and we equally agree in. I must do him the Justice to say, that he appears to have been sincerely well-affected to Virtue and Christian Morality : Which is more than can be said of many others who yet make a great Stir about *Morality*, crying it up in Opposition to *Faith* ; not with any real Design to advance either, but insidiously to undermine and destroy both. For after all the pretend-
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ed Aversion of such Men to the Christian Mysteries, it is not to be doubted but that they have a much greater Aversion to Christian Practice. They run greedily in with any new Schemes of Belief, not as containing *true* Religion, but as carrying *less* Religion in them, and approaching nearer to Irreligion. For they judge very right so far, that lopping off the main Branches first, is a great Point gained, and will make it easy afterwards to strike at the Root. In the mean while, they can be content, for Decency sake, to cry up *Virtue* and *Morality*, so long as Inroads are making upon *Faith*, and *Scripture* is thereby struck at ; which, as they very well know, is the only sure and solid Foundation both of Faith and Morality. If Scripture is once depreciated, and sunk in Esteem, what will become of our Morality ? Natural *Religion*, as it is called, will soon be what every Man pleases, and will shew itself in little else but natural *Depravity* : For supposing the Rules of Morality to be ever so justly drawn out, and worked up into a regular System, yet as there will be no certain Sanctions (Scripture once removed) to bind it on the Conscience, no clear Account of Heaven or Hell, or future Judgment to enforce it, we

may easily imagine how precarious a Bottom Morality will stand upon.

THE Result then is, that *Christian* Morality is the only one that will in all Points answer; and this must be supported by preserving the just Authority of the *Christian Law*: And this can no otherwise be kept up, but by maintaining the Veneration due to sacred Writ, both as to Matters of *Faith* and *Practice*. If we weaken its Authority in respect of either, we do it in both, and endanger the Whole. There is therefore no effectual Way of repairing the Breaches already made, but by returning to our old and well-tried Principles, and there making our Stand. If we once yield to go farther than is reasonable, or warrantable, in the subversive Way, there is no knowing where or when to stop. All beyond that, is wandering in Uncertainty, and steering without Mark, or Compass. The first Reformers, here and abroad, proceeded like wise Men, reducing Religion as near as could well be, to its pure and primitive State: They went by *Rule*, and so knew when they had done enough. There is an absolute Necessity of fixing a certain Rule, to prevent the endless Excursions of Flight and Fancy. That Rule is *Scripture*, but taking *Antiquity* along with it, as the best
Comment

Comment upon it. It was wise and excellent Advice given in one of our Canons in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, in the Year 1571. " That the Clergy should teach nothing from the Pulpit, as being of religious Obligation to the People to believe, but what should be consonant to the Doctrine of the *Old* or *New Testament*, and what the Catholick *Fathers* and *ancient Bishops* had collected or concluded from thence." How would both *Truth* and *Learning* flourish, were but this Rule carefully observed? Men that know little of the *Fathers* will of Course speak with Contempt of them. They were *Men*, 'tis true; but they were withal *great* and *good* Men: A Character which those will never arrive to, who presume to flout or despise them. But to proceed: The Rule I have already mentioned: There ought we to abide, and there to fix our firm Footing. Every Departure from it, will be a Departure, so far, from *Truth* and *Sobriety*; which if carried on but a little Way will do Mischief, but if pursued to the utmost (as it is natural for a Spirit of Error

to

* *Imprimis vero videbunt (Cóncionatores) ne quid unquam doceant pro Concione, quod a populo religiose teneri & credi velint, nisi quod Consensaneum sit Doctrina veteris aut novi Testamenti, quodque ex illa ipsa Doctrina Catholici patres & veteres Episcopi Collegerint.* Sparrow. Collect. p. 238.

to be restless) can end in nothing else but the most deplorable Confusion.

I DOUBT not but those who first began to divide upon the Article of the Trinity, might have Truth and Godliness at Heart (as they understood them) and might design well, not aware of the wild Distractions they were bringing us into. And though they have some of them lived to see and observe the Deluge of Infidelity flowing in upon us, it is probable that even That will not convince them of the false Step made at the Beginning, to which the rest has been owing: So natural is it for most of us to be fond of our own Schemes, and blind to our Failings. But certainly indifferent Standers-by may easily now see what should have been done at first, and what should never have been attempted. It is plain enough that *Arianism* is but the Dupe to *Deism*, as *Deism* again is to *Atheism*, or *Popery*: Time will shew which, unless we can yet be wise enough to retreat. I shall only add, that we have (God be thanked) still an excellent Church, pure and primitive, and by conforming to it, are in as safe a Way to Salvation as were the ancient Martyrs, or other Christians of the best and purest Times. Happy might it be for us could we but forbear tampering, and
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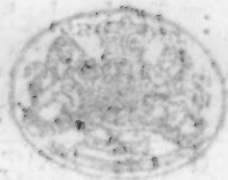
be content when we are well. Reformation is good, when Reformation is wanting : But to be always reforming is no reforming at all : It is behaving as Children tossed to and fro with every Wind of Doctrine. All Errors of any Moment have been purged off long ago, by the Care of our Reformers, and why then are we still reforming ? Physick may be proper at certain Seasons : But to pretend to live constantly upon it, instead of Food, is a certain Way to impair, and in a little Time to destroy the best and soundest Constitution in the World.

F I N I S.



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